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CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Arab-Israeli Talks

'Abd-al-Shafi on Israeli Policeman's Murder [Tel Aviv Radio] 1
'Ashrawi Denounces Violence [Jerusalem Radio] 1
Syria Said To Agree on Statement of Principles [AL-MANAR 14 Dec] 1
'No Significant Progress' Reported in 15 Dec Talks [Amman Radio] 1
Rabinovich Notes 'Interesting Elements' in al-Asad Speech [Jerusalem Radio] 2
Al-'Allaf Notes 'Retreat' in Israeli Position [Damascus Radio] 2
Progress Reported in Palestinian-Israeli Talks [HA'ARETZ 16 Dec] 2
Israelis: Talks With Lebanon 'Leading Nowhere' [YEDI'OT AHARONOT 16 Dec] 3
Al-'Allaf Denies Syrian Jews Refused Exit Visas [Paris Radio Monte Carlo] 3

Islamic Affairs

ICO States Asked To Review Ties With India [Islamabad Radio] 3
Indian Government Denounced [IRNA] 3

Palestinian Affairs

Hamas Says Israel Responsible for Soldier's Death [Paris Radio Monte Carlo] 4
Representative in Beirut Comments [VOL] 4
Action Said Unrelated to Talks [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 15 Dec] 4
Strategy Behind Kidnapping Noted [JORDAN TIMES 15 Dec] 5
'Arafat Calls For Urgent Meeting of Arab Ministers [AFP] 6
PNC Secretary Urges Rabin-'Arafat Meeting [MENA] 6
'Arafat on Arab Solidarity, Cooperation With Egypt [MENA] 6
Nabil Sha'th on Progress of Peace Talks [Baku Radio] 7
Iranian Official Addresses Intifadah Conference [IRNA] 7

South Asian Regional Affairs

SAARC Summit To Be Held in Dhaka 13, 14 Jan [Islamabad TV] 7
Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Sri Lankan Leaders Meet [Islamabad Radio] 7

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Perpetrators of Kouba Attack 'Wiped Out' [Algiers TV] 9
Foreign Minister on Relations With Iran, France [Algiers Radio] 9
Ghozali Comments on Events in Algeria, Relations [Algiers Radio] 9
Foreign Gang Attacks Citizen; Foreigners Deported [Algiers Radio] 9

Egypt

'Amr Musa Welcomes UN Call for Somali Conference [MENA] 10
Muslim Brotherhood Condemns U.S. Somalia Action [AL-SHA'B 11 Dec] 10
Columnist Criticizes Sudan's Stand on Somalia [AL-JUMHURIYAH 11 Dec] 10
Possibility of Intervention in Sudan Cited [AL-AHRAM 12 Dec] 11

Foreign Minister Receives Message From Sudan *[MENA]* 11
Evidence Implicates Sudan, Iran in Terrorism *[AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY]* 12
Head of Iranian Diplomatic Mission Still in Cairo *[MENA]* 12
Tension With Iran Reportedly Eased by al-Shar' *[VOM]* 12
Uzbek Officials Meet With Counterparts in Cairo *[MENA]* 12
Musa on Uzbek President's Visit *[Cairo Radio]* 13
Mubarak, Karimov Address Banquet *[MENA]* 13
Qatari Envoy Conveys Amir's Message to Mubarak *[MENA]* 15
Foreign Minister Meets With South Asian Envoys *[MENA]* 15
Delegation Returns From 'Successful' Paris Visit *[MENA]* 15
Ministers Approve Accords With Libya, U.S. *[Cairo Radio]* 15
Asyut Security Chief Details 'Intense' Campaign *[MENA]* 16

Libya

Crown Prince in Exile Interviewed *[London AL-HAYAH 10 Dec]* 16
Ship To Bring 1,000 Children From Bosnia *[Tripoli Radio]* 17

Sudan

Reports of Iranian Troops Said Exaggerated *[AFP]* 17
Commentary on Human Rights, Iranian Presence *[Omdurman Radio]* 18
'Extremists' Earmark $100 Million for Operations *[AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY]* 18

Tunisia

Army To Participate in Operation in Somalia *[Tunis Radio]* 18
Ben Yahya Comments on Various Foreign Issues *[AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY]* 19
Islamic Terrorist Network Reportedly Dismantled *[Paris International]* 19

ARABIAN PENINSULA

* Text, Appendix of Yemen-Oman Border Agreement *[London AL-HAYAH 20 Oct]* 21

Bahrain

Amir on Plans To Form Consultative Council *[WAKH]* 24

Qatar

Foreign Minister Leaves for Saudi Arabia 15 Dec *[WAKH]* 24

Saudi Arabia

Qatar Reportedly To Participate in Gulf Summit *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 24
Western Report on Rift With Ulema Rejected *[Riyadh Radio]* 24

Yemen

Prime Minister Reportedly Submits Resignation *[London AL-HAYAH 14 Dec]* 25
Government Adopts Political, Economic Measures *[Sanaa Radio]* 25
Prime Minister Confers With UNDP Official *[Sanaa Radio]* 27

IRAQ

Saddam Addresses Arab, Foreign Women *[INA]* 28
Paper Says Saddam Leaking Report on Resignation *[Voice of Iraqi People]* 29
Regime Said Preparing for Attacks in South *[Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution]* 29
Al-Madinah Party Branch Reportedly Bombed *[Voice of Rebellious Iraq]* 29
Kurdistan Parliament Speaker on West's Forces *[AL-HAYAH 12 Dec]* 29
Turkoman Oppositionist Fadil Dimirji Interviewed *[London AL-MAJALLAH 9-15 Dec]* 30
Progress on 'Mother of Battles River' Reported *[INA]* 31

ISRAEL

Further on Reaction to Killing of Policeman 32
Victim Died of Stab Wound [Jerusalem Radio] 32
Police Beefing Up Forces [Jerusalem Radio] 32
Rabin Addresses Knesset [Jerusalem TV] 32
Spokesman on Anti-Hamas Measures [Jerusalem Radio] 33
Rabin Warns of Security Measures [Jerusalem Radio] 33
'Emergency Steps' Detailed [Tel Aviv Radio] 33
Egyptian Ambassador Condemns Murder [Tel Aviv Radio] 34
Palestinians React to Murder [Jerusalem Radio] 34
Islamic Leader Condemns Murder [Tel Aviv Radio] 34
More Reaction to Murder [Jerusalem Radio] 35
Hamas Leader on Soldier's Murder [Jerusalem TV] 35
Rabin Opposes U.S. Submitting Autonomy Proposal [HA'ARETZ 16 Dec] 36

LEBANON

Bawayz Returns from France, Comments on Talks [Beirut Radio] 38
Bawayz on Paris Talks, Palestinian Issue, Iran [RFL] 38
Government Not To Take Part in Paris Arms Talks [Beirut Radio] 38
Bawayz Comments on Message From Egypt's Mubs [VOL] 38
Jibril Said Satisfied With al-Hariri Government [Beirut Radio] 39
Exiled Leaders on al-Hariri, Cabinet, Deputies [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 11 Dec] 39
Al-Murr on Political Sectarianism, Syrian Ties [RFL] 39
Jumblatt Calls on Displaced People To Return Home [Beirut Radio] 40

SYRIA

Al-Assad Inaugurates Trade Unions Congress [Damascus Radio] 41
Al-Shar', U.S. Congressmen Discuss Peace Talks [Damascus TV] 47
Vice President Meets Delegation [Damascus Radio] 47
Minister Comments on U.S. Terrorism List [AL-AHRAM 10 Dec] 47
Vice President Receives UN Fact-Finding Team [Damascus TV] 47
UN Team Discusses Peace Talks [Damascus Radio] 47
Al-Shar' Returns to Damascus From Cairo 14 Dec [SANA] 48
Minutes of Talks With CSFR Delegation Signed [Damascus Radio] 48
Czechoslovakian Delegation Departs [Damascus Radio] 48

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Spokesman Says Presidential Elections Delayed [AFP] 49
Mojaddedi Opposes Extending Rabbani's Term [Radio Message of Freedom] 49
Political Maneuvers Heighten as Rabbani Term Ends [THE FRONTIER POST 13 Dec] 49
New Military Commanders Appointed [Kabul Radio] 50

Bangladesh

Begum Zia Addresses Nation on Victory Day Eve [Dhaka Radio] 50

India

Islamabad, Dhaka Propaganda on Ayodhya Criticized [Delhi Radio] 51
BJP-Run State Governments Dismissed [Delhi Radio] 51
Curfew Tightened in 2 States [Delhi Radio] 52
Lok Sabha Adjourned After Uproar by BJP MP's [Delhi Radio] 52

Iran

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Delivers Budget Bill to Majlis *[Tehran Radio]* 53
President Calls for Expansion of Shipping *[IRNA]* 60
German Intelligence Probes Iranian Nuclear Program *[Hamburg WELT AM SONNTAG 6 Dec]* 61
Oil Exploration Continues in Caspian Sea *[Tehran Radio]* 62
Increasing Resources for Research Urged *[Tehran Radio]* 62
Khamenyi Appointed to Cultural Revolution Council *[Tehran TV]* 62
Pakistani Communications Minister Visits 62
Meets Velayati *[IRNA]* 63
Agreement Signed *[Tehran TV]* 63
Pakistan's Defense Minister Meets Rezai, Velayati *[Tehran TV]* 63
Cabinet Approves Cooperation Agreement With Qatar *[IRNA]* 63
Velayati Sends Message to Omani Counterpart *[IRNA]* 63
Talks With Kuwaiti Delegation on Transport Agreements *[IRNA]* 63
Editorial Urges Closer Ties With South Arabia *[TEHRAN TIMES 2 Dec]* 64
Annual Trade With Azerbaijan To Reach $100 Million *[IRNA]* 64
Daily Oil Production Cut by 300,000 Barrels *[IRNA]* 65
Islamic Revolution Called 'Death Knell' for Cairo *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 5 Dec]* 65
Power of Islam Said Greater Than Nuclear Weapons *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 7 Dec]* 66
Dailies React to German Statement on Rushdie *[IRNA]* 67
Former Afghan Militia Chief Arrested *[IRNA]* 67

Pakistan

Reaction to U.S., Bhutto's Claim on Nuclear Bombs 68
U.S. Senator Said 'Wrong' *[THE NATION 7 Dec]* 68
Bhutto Statements Called 'Naive' *[THE PAKISTAN TIMES 8 Dec]* 69
Content of Nuclear Program Viewed *[THE FRONTIER POST 6 Dec]* 69
U.S. Pressure on India Urged *[THE FRONTIER POST 4 Dec]* 70
India Urged To Stop Opposing Nuclear-Free Zone *[THE NEWS 14 Dec]* 70
Closing of Consulate General in Bombay Denied *[Islamabad Radio]* 71
Security Chief Denies Attack on Pakistani Boat *[THE MUSLIM 15 Dec]* 71
Chinese Military Delegation Arrives for Visit *[AFP]* 71
Akram Zaki Meets PRC Group, Discusses Kashmir *[Islamabad Radio]* 71
Most of Defense Budget Frozen for 3 Years *[THE NATION 15 Dec]* 72
9-Point Plan To Improve Investment Noted *[DAWN 9 Dec]* 73
MQM Chief Altaf Hussain Retires From Politics *[Islamabad Radio]* 73
Minister To Be Arrested for PDA Activist's Murder *[THE NATION 13 Dec]* 73

Arab-Israeli Talks

'Abd-al-Shafi on Israeli Policeman's Murder

TA1512165192 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Arab affairs correspondent Eldad Beck report on telephone interview with Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Washington peace talks, on 15 December; 'Abd-al-Shafi speaks in English—recorded]

[Text] [Beck] We managed to get a reaction to the border policeman's murder from Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi in Washington. 'Abd- al-Shafi condemned the murder.

['Abd-al-Shafi] Well, all I say is that we, I denounce and condemn the killing of innocent people, killing in cold blood, including what the death squads are committing against the Palestinian people.

[Beck] 'Abd-al-Shafi emphasized and reemphasized that he condemns the murder of the kidnapped soldier as well as the other killings.

'Abd-al-Shafi was asked whether developments since the kidnapping have had an impact on the peace talks.

['Abd-al-Shafi] Indeed, indeed, it reduces the credibility of these peace talks. This is a situation that's unbearable, and certainly from our side we feel we should do as much as we can to advance the peace process. That is a tragic situation also.

[Beck] 'Abd-al-Shafi was asked whether,in his opinion, the Israelis and moderate Palestinians have a common enemy today: radical Islam.

['Abd-al-Shafi] Let me say it like this: The common enemy is the absence of peace. I think all radical movements thrive, so our main concern is to work hard to achieve a just and fair peace.

'Ashrawi Denounces Violence

TA1612060892 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Report by Arye Golan in Washington]

[Text] Hanan 'Ashrawi, who together with Faysal al-Husayni will be received by President Bush in the White House on Friday, told a news conference: We denounce all acts of violence, as we are still in the peace process and are trying to make progress in the process, which is the only real solution to the fatal situation in which both nations are situated.

[Begin 'Ashrawi recording, in English] We deplore all acts of violence and actually attributed to that is the fact that we are still in this peace process, and we are trying in every way possible to achieve progress in this process as the only genuine solution to this fatal proximity between Israelis and Palestinians. [sentence as heard] [end recording]

Later on however, 'Ashrawi stressed: We, the Palestinians, are one people; we do not have good and bad. We can oppose the others' way; we have our own way to end the occupation and achieve peace.

[Begin 'Ashrawi recording, in English] I also would like to point out that we, as Palestinians, are one people; there are no different Palestinians. We serve the rights and aspirations, to live in freedom and in dignity and to end the occupation. We may differ on the means of achieving peace or of achieving freedom, or of bringing about the end to the occupation. We have chosen our means, our tactics; other people have their means and their tactics. That does not mean that the Palestinians have become two peoples. [end recording]

In reference to the talks themselves, no progress has yet been noted in the Palestinian track. In the Syrian track, Itamar Rabinovich asked for the original version of President al-Asad's speech and later said that it is the president's most positive expression on peace in recent months. With the Lebanese, the deadlock continues, and in the quiet track, the Jordanian-Israeli track, detailed talks in five working groups continue. Lee Hamilton, who is to head the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, with whom the Israeli delegation met, said that track appears to be the most positive.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 16 December reports: "Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, told Elyaqim Rubinstein, head of the Israeli delegation, that the Palestinians thank Israel for its efforts to reach an understanding with them on an agenda for the talks."]

Syria Said To Agree on Statement of Principles

TA1512161092 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 14 Dec 92 p 1

[Text] AL-MANAR has learned from high-ranking diplomatic sources that agreement has been reached between Damascus and Tel Aviv on a statement of principles and that this statement will be announced prior to President Clinton's assumption of power. These sources add that the Arab negotiating parties are only waiting to see who will sign first, with each party waiting for the other.

'No Significant Progress' Reported in 15 Dec Talks

JN1612085592 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] The Arab-Israeli peace talks resumed in Washington last night on all tracks. The Arab delegations' sources said there was no significant progress in the talks. More details are in the following report:

The Arab and Israeli delegations last night held a session of talks, the one before the last in the current eighth round. AFP cited Fayiz al-Tarawinah, member of the Jordanian delegation to the talks, as saying that the

Jordanian side is still waiting for a reply to some amendments to the agenda, indicating that the Jordanian delegation insists on these amendments. He added that there has been no progress since the beginning of the eighth round of talks on 7 December.

Regarding the Palestinian-Israeli track, [deputy] Israeli Ambassador in Washington Zalman Shoval, who attended the session of talks, said Israel will continue the talks despite the killing of the abducted Israeli soldier. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin had earlier said his government is determined to pursue the peace process despite the incident.

Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, told AFP that the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories should act as an incentive to tackle the issues causing this deterioration and reach a solution. She said what is going on is a result of the occupation. Commenting on the death of the Israeli soldier, 'Ashrawi said: We denounce the situation in general and violence results in victims from both the Israeli and Palestinian sides. She condemned the occupation authorities' detention of 1,200 Palestinian citizens since the start of the incident.

The Syrian and Israeli delegations resumed their negotiations. Talks focused on Israel's withdrawal from the Syrian Golan Heights. The Syrian delegation's sources said the Syrian side stressed during this session of talks that Israel should completely withdraw from the Golan. The Israeli side, however, continued to talks about what it termed withdrawal to secure and recognized borders.

On the Lebanese-Israeli track, the negotiations are still deadlocked over the issue of Israel's withdrawal from the occupied border strip in southern Lebanon. Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said in Beirut yesterday that Israel's advance commitment to withdrawal from Lebanon is a basic condition before the Israeli proposal to form a joint military committee can be accepted.

Rabinovich Notes 'Interesting Elements' in al-Asad Speech

TA1512204092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Another day of peace talks between Israel and the Arab countries is underway in Washington. Our correspondent Arye Golan reports from Washington.

[Begin recording] [Golan] During the meeting currently underway with the Syrian delegation, Professor Itamar Rabinovich, head of the Israeli negotiating team, intends to raise for discussion statements made by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday regarding the peace process. Upon arriving at the State Department in Washington this evening, Rabinovich said that al-Asad's speech contained interesting elements. He had discovered an ambiguity or a double entendre on what he said was a very important issue. Rabinovich said that he intended to raise the matter and to ask for the original version of the speech in Arabic. Rabinovich said that, if this ambiguity proved constructive, he would address the matter tonight. He apparently was referring to al-Asad's statements regarding a partial withdrawal.

When he arrived for this evening's meeting, Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation, explained to correspondents that President al-Asad had not implied any readiness to accept a partial Israeli withdrawal as an initial step toward peace. On the contrary, al-'Allaf said, the Syrian president clearly had stated that what we need now is not a partial peace or a partial solution, but a full peace, the Syrian delegate stressed. [end recording]

[Reporting from Washington, Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 15 December adds that when asked to react to THE NEW YORK TIMES report this morning, whereby Syria stopped issuing exit visas to Syrian Jews, the head of the Syrian peace delegation said, in English: "I thought you are going to ask me about the talks, but this is not correct; no change in the policy of Syria of issuing visas, but I wish you ask me things about the talks." The report also added that "Prof. Itamar Rabinovich, the head of the Israeli delegation, raised the visas issue in this morning's talks, asking the Syrians for clarifications."]

Al-'Allaf Notes 'Retreat' in Israeli Position

JN1612074692 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation to the peace talks, has said that yesterday's meeting witnessed a retreat in the Israeli positions, which makes it unthinkable to talk about progress in the eighth round.

Speaking after the meeting, he said that the Israelis are pushing the talks toward a dead end. Replying to a question about the possibility of holding another session before the administration of U.S. President-elect Bill Clinton takes office, al-'Allaf wondered: How can we talk about a new round when the talks are facing such a dead end?

Al-'Allaf explained that the retreat in the Israeli position was manifested in ideas presented by the Israeli side dealing with many aspects, most of which concern what the Israelis think are issues of interest to them.

Progress Reported in Palestinian-Israeli Talks

TA1612093192 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 16 Dec 92 p A1

[Report by Ori Nir and 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpts] Progress was made in yesterday's negotiations with the Palestinian delegation at the Washington peace talks, when the Palestinians presented their counterproposal for a joint agenda, in response to the Israeli offer. Sources in both delegations have said that there is a reasonable chance of reaching agreement on the agenda in the near future. Yesterday, the Palestinians also publicly announced their willingness to draft a joint document of principles with Israel.

The Israeli delegation was also very encouraged by the recent remarks of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, who expressed reserved support for a partial withdrawal. Upon the request of the Israeli delegation, the Syrian delegation yesterday presented a transcript in Arabic of al-Asad's original remarks on this issue. After reviewing it, Israel's chief delegate Itamar Rabinovich said that the fact that the Syrian leaders have been making more explicit remarks about the nature of peace, and mainly the new phrasing by al-Asad regarding the partial withdrawal, should be welcome. Rabinovich said: "The president referred to Israel's partial withdrawal from the Golan Heights in 1974—defining it as a step toward peace, and not as peace-making—and asked himself whether what we are doing now is making peace or taking a step toward peace. If the aim of the remark was to reject the possibility of a partial withdrawal, then this was done in a very interesting manner."

The Israeli team for talks with Syria yesterday presented a new document summarizing offers Israel has made in previously presented documents. Rabinovich said that this document should serve as a tool to advance in the discussions and avoid wasting time in discussions of minor details at this stage of the talks. He did not say whether the new document includes new stands or concessions. [passage omitted]

No new developments were reported from the talks with the Lebanese and Jordanian delegations. The Jordanians have not yet raised their request to set up a working group on the refugee problem. They mentioned their intention to do that in the previous round of talks. [passage omitted]

Israelis: Talks With Lebanon 'Leading Nowhere'

TA1612091192 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 16 Dec 92 p 14

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Smadar Peri]

[Text] The Israeli delegation to the Washington talks with Lebanon will today issue an announcement containing a warning of unprecedented gravity summing up the current round of talks. The announcement will say that "Israel has been conducting talks with Lebanon for an entire year, and the two sides have reached a situation leading nowhere—due to the behavior of the Lebanese."

YEDI'OT AHARONOT learned last night that the Israeli delegation has raised in the 55 working sessions held so far 10 possible solutions, but the Lebanese delegation has rejected all of them, "including proposals they refused even to look at," a source in the Israeli delegation said last night.

The Israeli delegation blames the Lebanese Government for the resulting deadlock. "We cannot have a situation whereby in all the other talks being held with Arab delegations, working papers, working groups are set up, debates and deliberations are held, while in the talks with Lebanon we only hear, 'Get out of Lebanon.' Up to now, they have not reviewed a single proposal."

In the current round of talks, a new Israeli proposal was rejected even though the Lebanese delegation did not even present a counterproposal. "We must return home and reevaluate the usefulness of the talks. If they continue to reject us, and we do not care who is preserving them, we will not get anywhere," a source in the talks with Lebanon said last night.

Al-'Allaf Denies Syrian Jews Refused Exit Visas

JN1612004092 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] In Washington, Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation to the Arab-Israeli negotiations, has expressed amazement at what he described a smear campaign against Syria, while commenting on Washington's accusation that Syria has recently stopped issuing visas for Syrian Jews.

A U.S. State Department spokesman yesterday said that Washington has asked for clarifications from Damascus on this issue. Muwaffaq al-'Allaf asserted that Syria has not stopped issuing visas for Syrian Jews, noting that a visa is necessary for any Syrian citizen who wants to leave the country. Al-'Allaf said that raising this issue in particular is part of a smear campaign against Syria.

Islamic Affairs

ICO States Asked To Review Ties With India

BR0912011192 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 9 Dec 92

[Text] Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] Secretary General Hamid Algabid has asked the Islamic states to review economic and diplomatic ties with India if it does not take appropriate action to rebuild the Babri Masjid mosque or if it fails to protect the lives and property of its Muslims. Talking to newsmen in Jeddah after a telephone conversation with Pakistan Minister of State For Foreign Affairs Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo, the ICO secretary general said that he has directed the Islamic Coordination Group at the United Nations to raise this issue at the UN Security Council. The group comprises Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Senegal, Pakistan and ICO representatives.

Hamid Algabid said that the incident could damage India's ties with the Islamic world. He added that India should keep in view its interests with Islamic states.

Indian Government Denounced

LD0912180092 Tehran IRNA in English 1804 GMT 9 Dec 92

[Text] United Nations Headquarters (New York), Dec. 9, IRNA—Representatives of the fifty-member Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] at the U.N.

denounced Indian Government for failing to prevent destruction of the historic Babri Mosque and called on New Delhi to take necessary precautions to protect Muslim religious sites in India.

The statement issued at the end of an extraordinary meeting of OIC representatives here Tuesday night, also denounced the massacre of hundreds of innocent people, mostly Muslims, in the turmoil which has spread across India following the shocking crime.

December 6 was a step backwards for humanity and a black day in the history of India, as thousand hordes of Hindu fanatics razed down the 16th century Babri Mosque in the north Indian town of Faizabad, and began building an idol house at the site.

Expressing deep concern over the safety of Indian Muslims the statement urged the Indian Government to guarantee the security of its Muslim citizens and to observe its duties vis-a-vis the Human Rights Charter to safeguard the religious and cultural sites of the Muslims in India.

Islamic Governments also called on India to reconstruct the historic Babri Mosque at its very site, immediately bring to justice the elements responsible for its demolition and guarantee the rights of ethnic and religious minorities.

The statement called on the belligerent parties to preserve their self-restraint and to prevent expansion of clashes. The meeting assigned a delegation led by Turkey's permanent envoy to the United Nations, Mustafa Aksin, to meet the U.N. Secretary General Butros Butros-Ghali and follow up the Babri Mosque issue through the United Nations.

The statement also called on Butros-Ghali to take measures to ensure the rights of Indian Muslims and protect their sanctuaries.

Aksin told reporters following the meeting that all Islamic countries voiced their deep sorrows and dissatisfaction over the incident. He did not rule out the possibility of taking up the issue in the Human Rights Commission or the U.N. General Assembly, saying that they expected the Indian Government to punish the culprits responsible for the tragedy and reconstruct the mosque.

Pakistan's permanent envoy, Jamshed Marker, said the mosque demolition may have negative impacts on Islamabad-New Delhi ties and made it clear that the Islamic world rejected any kind of attacks or violations of sanctuaries of divine religions.

Palestinian Affairs

Hamas Says Israel Responsible for Soldier's Death

JN1512183392 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] The Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement has issued a statement in the occupied territories, holding the Israeli Government responsible for the killing of Israeli soldier Toledano because it refused to release Shaykh Ahmad Yasin. The statement adds that the Israeli Government, who has set various conditions in an attempt to gain more time in favor of the comprehensive search campaign carried out by the Army, police, and border guard. The statement says that resisting occupation and targeting its soldiers and military machine are a firm policy of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas.

In Beirut, one of the movement's leaders said the Hamas strugglers killed the Israeli soldier out of fear that they would be discovered. He added that the Hamas struggles are ready to repeat such operations.

Representative in Beirut Comments

NC1512183192 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1731 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] A representative of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, made a statement in Beirut today, saying that Hamas members who abducted the Israeli soldier killed him for fear of being caught. He added that Hamas is ready to repeat the operation. Abu-Muhammad Mustafa told AFP that: Our goal was not to kill him but to pressure Israel to secure the release of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin. He added that the Israeli Government, by refusing to negotiate, was responsible for the soldier's death.

The Hamas representative in Beirut said that the abductors killed the soldier because the troops deployed by the Israeli Army made it difficult for them to retain their hostage while conducting negotiations. He said: We are ready to repeat the operation until the liberation of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, who is serving a life sentence, and the entire land of Palestine. If the Israeli Army were to carry out reprisal operations, Hamas will escalate its moves.

Meanwhile, the Hamas movement tonight issued a statement blaming the Israeli Government for the killing of the soldier Toledano, because that government refused to release Shaykh Ahmad Yasin and made conditions of its own to gain time and carry out large-scale sweeps. The statement said that resistance against the occupation and attacks on its soldiers and military machine are establishing elements of Hamas' policy.

Action Said Unrelated to Talks

PM1612090092 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Dec 92 p3

[Ali Salih report: "Hamas Representative in Jordan Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: The Kidnapping of the Israeli Sergeant Major Has Nothing To Do With the Middle East Peace Negotiations"]

[Text] London—Muhammad Nazzal, representative of the Palestinian Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in Jordan has confirmed that his movement is ready to negotiate with Israel regarding the kidnapped Israeli sergeant major. He said "it is up to the other side.

namely Israel." He denied any connection between this operation and the current peace negotiations.

Nazzal was talking to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in London in a telephone interview from his headquarters in the Jordanian capital yesterday.

Hamas had kidnapped the Israeli officer at dawn the day before yesterday near his home in Lod. According to Nazzal, special units from the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Battalion carried out the operation. One of these units, called Mus'ab 53, had kept the officer, Nissim Toledano, under surveillance and then its members attacked him as he come out of the house. Hamas wants to exchange him for its spiritual leader in the occupied territory Shaykh Ahmad Yasin who is serving a life sentence in a prison near Tel Aviv having been convicted on the charge of instigating the destruction of the Jewish state.

Asked if the negotiations would take place in or outside the occupied territory if Israel agreed, Nazzal said that "the Hamas leadership inside the occupied territory is the only party capable of determining the method and venue of the negotiations." He added that "the kidnapping took place in the occupied territory. It would be logical, therefore, to negotiate there."

Asked if negotiations in the occupied territory would not reveal members of the movement and expose them to danger, the Hamas representative said that "the movement inside is capable of dealing with this matter in a suitable way."

Asked if the operation was part of a new Hamas strategy, he replied that the "escalation strategy was adopted by Hamas a long time ago. It recently succeeded in the implementation of several military operations." He added "I emphasize that it is our legitimate right to use all means to achieve our objectives because we are in a state of war with Israel." He pointed out that the Israeli occupation was continuing its campaign against the Palestinian people, paying no attention to human rights in the occupied territory.

He further said that "this kidnapping incident has a humanitarian dimension because of Shaykh Yasin's state of health in prison and Israel's refusal to respond to the appeals made by various parties for his release."

It should be noted that Shaykh Yasin's health is deteriorating daily. He has lost his sight, hearing, and ability to move and has breathing problems. According to his lawyer 'Abd-al-Malik al-Dahamshah, the only active organ in Shaykh Yasin's body is his brain.

Nazzal concluded by ruling out any link between this operation and the current peace negotiations between the PLO and Israel.

Strategy Behind Kidnapping Noted

JN1512153092 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 15 Dec 92 pp 1, 3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Maryam Shahin]

[Text] Amman—The kidnapping of an Israeli policeman in the city of Lod Sunday marked the latest phase in what Hamas calls its strategy to "liberate Palestine from Zionist occupation."

While the kidnapping aims at freeing Hamas leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, Hamas officials in Amman say it is the first in a series the organisation plans to take to force Israelis to "leave Palestine."

The organisation, which evolved in the early 1980s in the occupied territories, is a religious group which is at odds with main-stream Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) groups that support a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Hamas's goal is to liberate Palestine of Jewish control from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River. Like religious parties in Israel, the organisation opposes political cohabitation with secular forces.

On a practical level, however, Hamas has formed a coalition with Palestinian leftist groups that oppose the current peace process, although the latter do not subscribe the Hamas's goal of total liberation.

In July, Hamas, joining forces with four PLO parties and five non-PLO groups, formed anti-peace talks Palestinian coalition, formally known as the Damascus 10, and has lately stepped up anti-Israeli operations within the occupied territories.

The group's aim, says Amman-based spokesman Muhammad Nazzal, is to make life impossible for the Israelis in the occupied territories.

Military operations, such as the one in which two Israeli soldiers were killed three days ago in Gaza, are what Hamas promised two months ago when it outlined a stepped-up military campaign.

"The military battle is inside the 1967 territories and will be carried out by Hamas and other members of the Damascus 10," Mr. Nazzal told the Jordan Times last week. "Some military operations," he said, "will continue from outside—from south Lebanon," he added, evidently referring to Hizbullah operations against Israel.

"This way we put pressure (on Israel) from both inside and outside, this is a war—a war of liberation," said Mr. Nazzal said at his Amman office.

Dr. Nazzal last week ruled out "operations" inside Israel itself similar to Sunday's kidnapping of Sergeant Nassim Taledano which took place in Lod, in the heart of British-mandated Palestine.

"We will not carry out military operations (in 1948-Palestine) at this stage. Our influence has grown substantially among the so-called Israeli Arabs but the time is not right yet for them to get really involved in the struggle on the military level," Mr. Nazzal said.

"We are awaiting a response from the Israelis," said Mr. Nazzal late Monday. "If the peace talks can't convince the Israelis that they should withdraw then maybe we can convince them by other means," he said.

Asked if he believed that the Israelis have react to the incident by withdrawing from the occupied territories, the Hamas spokesman said. "No. But they will want to more now than ever before."

'Arafat Calls For Urgent Meeting of Arab Ministers

NC1612112892 Paris AFP in English 1111 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] Sanaa, Dec 16 (AFP)—PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat on Wednesday called for an urgent meeting of Arab foreign ministers to discuss the Arab-Israeli peace talks, which he said had failed to make progress.

"The convening of such a conference is necessary because the eighth round of peace talks is coming to an end and the new American Administration takes office in a few weeks," 'Arafat told the Yemeni news agency SABA'.

He said that "no results" had emerged from the peace talks, which were launched 14 months ago under joint sponsorship by the United States and Russia.

As a result, 'Arafat said, an Arab foreign ministers' meeting should be held as soon as possible if a summit cannot be convened.

The Palestine Liberation Organization chief arrived Wednesday in the Yemeni capital Sanaa, to discuss the latest Arab and Palestinian developments with Yemeni leaders.

PNC Secretary Urges Rabin-'Arafat Meeting

NC1612100992 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0926 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 16 Dec (MENA)—Palestine National Council Secretary Muhammad Subayh has stated that the PLO welcomes holding elections in the occupied territories, adding that the PLO is certain that Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat will win these elections with an absolute majority.

In a recent statement in Tokyo, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said that Israel is prepared to negotiate with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat if the Palestinian people in the occupied territories elect him as their representative.

In an exclusive statement to MENA, Subayh said: We hope the Israeli foreign minister's recent statement represents a new view of the Palestinian issue and a pragmatic way of dealing with it. He added: Everybody knows that President 'Arafat enjoys the confidence of the Palestinian people at home and abroad, despite attempts by several forces and quarters to cast doubt on this confidence. He said that the Israeli side is well aware of this.

Subayh said that a meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat would be a sound shortcut for the peace talks, indicating that such a meeting would shorten the way for all the Middle East parties.

'Arafat on Arab Solidarity, Cooperation With Egypt

NC1512194092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0807 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Tunis, 15 Dec (MENA)—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat has called for a meeting of Arab foreign ministers, in case holding an Arab summit is not possible, to discuss the future of the peace negotiations and the Arab nation's role in the new world order. He said this meeting must be held after the current round of peace negotiations and before the new U.S. Administration takes over.

Speaking last night to a delegation of Egyptian journalists visiting Tunisia, 'Arafat affirmed that consultations over the peace process are continuing between Palestine and other Arab countries. Noting that Palestinian coordination with Egypt is special and effective, he said this cooperation is carried out not as Egypt's capacity as an observer, but as a full partner in everything that concerns the Palestinian people. He said the Palestinian delegation is drawing on Egypt's negotiating experience.

'Arafat praised Egypt's support for the Palestinian cause, noting that it has offered 86,000 martyrs to the cause so far and also is making intensive efforts to remedy the situation in occupied Jerusalem. He denounced Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's announcement that Jerusalem is Israel's eternal capital, saying such statements are designed to obstruct the peace efforts.

'Arafat warned of the possibility that Israel might be attempting to normalize its relations with the Arabs at the expense of Palestinian rights.

The Palestinian president voiced hope that it will be possible to close Arab ranks, restore inter-Arab solidarity, and overcome the divisions caused by the Gulf war. He stressed the role that political parties and popular organizations can play in healing this Arab rift.

'Arafat denounced Iran's support for extremism and terrorism and its training of terrorists in its camps to send them to Arab countries in order to destabilize them. He pointed out that Iran is playing a dangerous role in harming the Palestinian people's progress by backing Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. The Palestinian president denied there is Arab mediation to bring about a reconciliation between Iran and the Palestinian leadership. He said he believes Iran is not interested in having good relations with the Arab world.

'Arafat denied reports published by several foreign newspapers that Pope John Paul II will visit Jerusalem. He asserted that the pope plays a positive and effective role in defending the Palestinian people's rights and in backing the peace process.

Ending his remarks to Egyptian journalists, 'Arafat said that the Palestinian intifadah, now entering its sixth year, has revived the Palestinian issue and dismayed the Israeli leaders. He added that their statements about the intifadah reveal the extent of Israeli anxiety and instability in this connection.

Nabil Sha'th on Progress of Peace Talks

LD1112213292 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Dec 92

[Text] In the Middle Eastern file, at the time when political observers of the current round of Arab-Israeli talks considered that the first week of this round was devoted only to exchanging points of view, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to the Palestinian president and adviser to the Palestinian negotiating delegation with the Israelis, stated that a little progress has been registered after eight rounds of the Arab-Israeli talks.

Nabil Sha'th added that this progress is represented by the Israeli side's approval for the return of a few hundred expelled Palestinians.

This progress is considered to be symbolic if the number of expelled Palestinians, which reached several thousand, is taken into account.

Nabil Sha'th considered that U.S. President George Bush's invitation to meet with all the delegations taking part in the talks is significant, and expressed hope that the invitation will be a starting point for reviving the United States' role in the peace process.

Iranian Official Addresses Intifadah Conference

LD1412192492 Tehran IRNA in English 1816 GMT 14 Dec 92

[Text] Beirut, Dec. 14, IRNA—Iran's Parliament Speaker Hojjat al-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri today termed the Intifadah in Palestine as a "manifestation of the Palestinian people's will which has driven the last nail in the coffin of negotiations with the Zionist regime."

In a message to the fourth international conference in support of Intifadah which opened here today, Nateq-Nuri called on Palestinian groups to join the Intifadah and escalate their Jihad (holy struggle) against the usurper Zionist state.

The question of Palestine concerns the world's one billion-plus Muslims, he said and urged the Muslim world to mobilize all its political, material and spiritual resources in support of the intifadah.

The Majles speaker's message proposed formation of a united front of Muslim forces in the confrontation with the al-Quds [Jerusalem] occupying regime.

To this end, he reaffirmed the Islamic republic's readiness to fully support the anti-Zionist struggle of Muslim nations.

On the opening day of the conference, personalities from Lebanon, Palestine, Iran and Bosnia-Herzegovina delivered speeches calling for formation of a united front against Israel and condemning any compromise with the Zionists.

The speakers also castigated the United States of America for its backing of the illegal Zionist regime.

South Asian Regional Affairs

SAARC Summit To Be Held in Dhaka 13, 14 Jan

BK1012145692 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 10 Dec 92

[Text] In Dhaka, the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] Council of Ministers today decided that the Seventh SAARC Summit will now be held in Dhaka on the 13th and 14th of January.

Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Sri Lankan Leaders Meet

BK1312142792 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0300 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, Sri Lankan President Premadasa, and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia have said the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SAARC] can achieve its objectives if all major issues among SAARC member countries of the organization are resolved. They said this at a banquet which Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh hosted in honor of Mohammad Nawaz Sharif and Sri Lankan President Premadasa in Dhaka last night.

The [Pakistani] prime minister said the objective of his visit to Bangladesh was to express mutual commitment to promote cooperation between SAARC member countries and to boost the eternal, friendly ties and understanding between the people of Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Mohammad Nawaz Sharif said the most important issue between Pakistan and India is the Kashmir problem, which can resolved by granting the Kashmiri people their basic right of self-determination, which had been promised in the UN resolutions. He said Pakistan is ready to play its role to the fullest extent in seeking a peaceful negotiated settlement of the issue. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif said he has come to Bangladesh to express complete understanding and solidarity with Bangladesh, at a time when fanatical forces have pushed the region into darkness by demolishing the Babri Mosque, which was an Islamic cultural treasure in the region. This

abhorrent act, which shattered the consciences of all civilized people, is a very tragic event for Muslims throughout the world.

The [Pakistani] prime minister said we have to contain the extremist forces and foil their designs, which trample on civilized values and impede efforts for the promotion of peaceful and cordial relations in our region on the basis of protection of the rights of all people. We must uphold the Islamic traditions of tolerance while displaying patience and restraint. We should urge the Indian Government to fulfill its pledge to reconstruct the mosque at its original site. The prime minister recalled Begum Khaleda Zia's visit to Pakistan in August last year and said we are committed to giving a practical shape to the understanding between the people of our two countries.

Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in her speech expressed the confidence that next month's SAARC summit in Dhaka will achieve its objectives. She said we are all aware of the tragic incidents for which the summit was postponed. She, however, stressed that efforts should be made for the promotion of integrity among South Asian people.

Sri Lankan President Premadasa said there has been progress in resolving major issues among member countries and we have taken several steps in the fields of trade liberalization, economic cooperation, alleviation of poverty, and utilization of investment for development. On trade liberalization, the Sri Lankan president said it should be ensured that all regional countries are benefited by this and that each country enjoys free and easy access to sell at least one item in the SAARC market.

Radio Pakistan's special representative Abdus Shakur accompanying the prime minister to cover his visit said that a delegation of the Pakistan Railway will soon visit Dhaka and hold talks on the supply of railway trucks to the Bangladesh Railway.

During the talks with the Bangladeshi prime minister, Mohammad Nawaz Sharif proposed the setting up of joint ventures, including a sugar mill project. A Pakistani cultural delegation is expected to visit Bangladesh during the SAARC summit in Dhaka next month. The two countries agreed on the visit in order to boost cultural ties between them. Pakistan will provide cricket coaching facilities to Bangladesh as well.

Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif has since returned home.

Algeria

Perpetrators of Kouba Attack 'Wiped Out'

LD1512203792 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Excerpts] The crime that led to the death of five policemen in Kouba yesterday has not passed without punishment. The security forces have wiped out completely those who executed and perpetrated the crime. [passage omitted]

After just over 24 hours, the Kouba incident has not passed as merely a casual incident. In a very short time the perpetrators of the crime were punished harshly. The security forces have wiped out completely the planners and executors of that vile crime with the help of loyal citizens. No disturbance of public security will pass without deterrent action.

Foreign Minister on Relations With Iran, France

LD1512135992 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] In an interview published today by the newspaper LE JOURNAL, Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi dealt with Algerian diplomatic activity and Algeria's relations with some countries, such as Iran and France.

Concerning the softness of the Algerian diplomatic line, as some put it, Mr. Brahimi said that these statements did not mean a great deal. After pointing out that diplomacy is an instrument used by the state in the framework of a general policy, Mr. Brahimi affirmed that Algeria inevitably retaliated against aggression and had a range of means for retaliation.

Speaking of Iran's maneuvers against Algeria, Mr. Brahimi said that Tehran hoped for the emergence of a pro-Iran regime. He noted that Iran could be reproached for many other things, particularly the goings and comings of some Algerians to Iran, as well as political enticement and the use of Iranian embassies for the passing of some forms of aid to certain movements.

Lakhdar Brahimi added that the Iranians realize what their practices would lead to: Algeria's dismay. He underlined that Iran was not able to join the group of 15 because of its attempts to interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries.

Regarding Algerian-French relations, the foreign minister said that they had not been and for a long time would not be normal due to feelings resulting from objective and subjective causes, even though France remained the biggest economic partner of Algeria, and we are an important country as far as France is concerned.

Ghozali Comments on Events in Algeria, Relations

LD1612111492 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] It is naive to believe that what is currently taking place in Algeria could pass without pain. Despite that, it is impossible to predict a civil war because the conditions for such an event have not been fulfilled. This was said by Sid Ahmed Ghozali, our ambassador in Paris, in an interview which he gave to Radio Europe 1, adding that the terrorists belong to a group which resembles neo-Nazis. Their aim is to arrive at power by force and the state is working to provide the conditions to fight this phenomenon.

Sid'Ahmed Ghozali pointed out that the process of combatting terrorism requires capabilities and specialization in this sphere, and despite the state's other preoccupations, it is working toward eliminating the factors which nourish violence, among which is Social injustice.

In his analysis of Algerian-French relations, our ambassador in Paris affirmed that they have always been characterized by some sort of sentimental discord. He rejected the view that the Algerian Government has never stopped complaining about France, and said if that is the case the Algerian Government would still not have complained as [much as] the French Government has.

Foreign Gang Attacks Citizen; Foreigners Deported

LD1612082392 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Excerpts] In Tamanrasset yesterday an armed gang consisting of four persons attacked a citizen in a Toyota car 12 km east of the city. The gang members are all foreigners who are illegal residents, as our correspondent explains:

[Correspondent] The victim was fired on by the gang when he refused to stop. The tires of his car were blown. The wilaya security forces intervened quickly after the victim contacted them. They were able to detain members of the gang after an armed clash with them five km from the scene of the attack. The members of the gang were wounded, two of them seriously. They had an AK-47 automatic rifle and a quantity of money and supplies. [passage omitted]

We also point out that the attackers, according to the security authorities, are all citizens of Niger.

Still in Tamanrasset the deportation of foreigners who are illegal residents continues. Once again our correspondent there reports:

[Correspondent] This morning 60 foreigners, all Malian citizens, were transported to the southwestern borders in [name indistinct] because of secret immigration and illegal residency in Algeria. Another similar operation will be carried out tonight or tomorrow, according to the wilaya security authorities.

Egypt

'Amr Musa Welcomes UN Call for Somali Conference

NC1512171392 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 15 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has welcomed the call by UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali for a Somali national reconciliation conference to be attended by the various parties to the Somali dispute, the Arab League, the OAU, and the Islamic Conference Organization in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 794.

In a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry this evening, Musa expressed the hope that the Somali factions that would take part in the conference would take this opportunity to agree on the need to preserve Somalia's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity and achieve progress, prosperity, and democratic and political development for the Somali people.

The statement mentioned the Egypt's efforts over the past few months to convene a reconciliation conference and stated Egypt's preparedness to do more to help the Somalis achieve full national accord.

Muslim Brotherhood Condemns U.S. Somalia Action

NC1512104092 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 11 Dec 92 p 7

[Text] The Muslim Brotherhood [MB] has issued a statement condemning the dispatch of U.S. forces to Somalia under the pretext of protecting the distribution of aid. The statement clarified that the cause of the Somali and Islamic peoples' woes is the absence of the application of the Islamic shari'ah, which confirms and safeguards freedoms, supports consultation, and highlights the need for unity. The statement asks where the Arab and Islamic governments are, especially since there are no excuses or pretexts preventing these governments from intervening to rescue the starving, wounded, and suffering. Where is the Arab League if it cannot intervene to rescue a fraternal Arab people and to guarantee the security of a region vital for the Arab nation, namely the Horn of Africa and Bab el Mandeb in the Red Sea? Where is the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO], and why did it not discuss the Somalia problem? The statement said that events have escalated to a point where Arab Islamic territory has been occupied by huge foreign forces who have been welcomed by official Arab circles, or by silence bearing the signs of acceptance and acquiescence from the political and popular forces. This confirms the failure of the course our Arab nation has taken after it succeeded in expelling the former colonialists. The MB warns against the dimensions of this suspect U.S. intervention in Somalia. It warns of the dangers to pan-Arab and Islamic security. This intervention constitutes a dangerous omen portending the return of the age of military occupation once again under the pretext of resolving regional disputes. We call on the poor people fighting each other in fraternal Somalia to sit down quickly at the national reconciliation table under the umbrella of the Arab League, the ICO, or the OAU to end the tragedy of the Somali people and stop the U.S. designs.

We ask the Arab and Islamic governments to form the needed forces to restore true hope to the Somali people and take the place of the U.S. forces as soon as possible before occupation is completed.

We ask the United Nations to cast another look at the formation of the forces under its umbrella to make sure they come only from Islamic and Arab countries.

The statement called on the Islamic peoples to be cautious regarding the dangers looming around them, on the rich Muslims to help their brothers, and the Somali people to renounce tribal conflicts, unite under the banner of Islam, and reject foreign occupation.

Columnist Criticizes Sudan's Stand on Somalia

NC1512093392 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 11 Dec 92 p 14

["Dividing Lines" column by Samir Rajab]

[Text] Sudan's rulers have chosen to take the road running in the opposite direction regarding many issues and regional and international questions. They have the right to do so if they so please, no doubt.

For example, they supported Saddam Husayn when he invaded Kuwait. They praised his loss and error in carrying out aggression against territories and violating sanctities. Events after that proved the gravity of the error the original perpetrator of the act had made. When the balance began to tip in Iran's favor, they ran to Iran and threw themselves at its feet, promising to implement all its legitimate and illegitimate demands.

Yesterday, "brother" 'Umar al-Bashir in Sudan attacked the principle of having some Arab countries dispatch peace-keeping troops to Somalia. He said this could lead to these countries imposing a government in their favor. Truly, politics has its men, the leadership cannot be bought, sold, or obtained through luck.

The countries that approved dispatching troops to Somalia do not seek anything but to save the Somali people from the crisis they are suffering.

Does al-Bashir accept having thousands of people die from starvation, exposure, or disease? Or perhaps such a phenomenon has become second nature to him in view of what his country has been going through recently, after the so-called National Salvation Revolution took over in Sudan.

The international forces that have begun their humanitarian mission in Somalia, including the Arab forces, will

try to give back to the sons of these Muslim people the most basic needs of life. So why do Khartoum's rulers get angry and object?

As for the story that one country or a group of Arab countries will impose a government that supports them in Somalia, the soundest response to that comes in the following crucial and logical question:

Assuming this does happen—even if it is too soon to tell, and even if the principle of interfering in the affairs of others has become rejected worldwide—is it not a thousand times better than the control and force of the gangs of robbery and thievery?

Possibility of Intervention in Sudan Cited

NC1412220992 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic
12 Dec 92 p8

[From the "Close-Up" column by Sulaymah Ahmad Sulaymah]

[Text] Will Sudan's turn come after Somalia? A few days ago, the United Nations issued a strong condemnation of Sudan, accusing it of human rights violations. The United States strongly supported this condemnation in light of the Sudanese Government's actions, described as similar to "ethnic cleansing" in the al-Nubah mountains, executions in Juba, the displacement and expelling of tens of thousands of refugees from Khartoum, and the execution of two U.S. AID employees.

The resolution has raised speculation that intervention might be called for in Sudan for humanitarian reasons, as happened in Somalia. Several Western circles hinted at this solution, which is openly advocated by former U.S. President Ronald Reagan and some U.S. congressmen.

During a recent meeting in Cairo, Herman Cohen, U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs, explained the background of developments that led to the U.S. military intervention in Somalia. He said that the operation to rescue Somalia was necessary after it became clear that the international relief agencies and UN forces were unable to stop the serious deterioration in the tragedy of thousands of people dying of famine because armed gangs had taken control of the food distribution. He also said that the U.S. public was shocked by scenes of the crisis. All this helped President Bush make his decision to intervene, despite the fact that he is at the end of his term.

It is clear that Operation Restore Hope has so far been proceeding as planned. It represents the beginning of a shift in what is called the new world order and in U.S. policy, where the defense of U.S. interests, threat to U.S. security, or a threat to the free world will not be the only justifiable reasons to use military intervention. Instead, the internal conditions of a country, the violation of human rights, or saving people from death by famine could become acceptable international justification for foreign intervention. The only precedent of this was the intervention to save the Kurds from the Iraqi regime. To what extent can this principle become acceptable and legitimate?

The U.S. official refused to confirm or deny speculation that a situation might arise in Sudan similar to that in Somalia, placing the regime of 'Umar al-Bashir in risk and danger.

No one supports intervention of this kind in Sudan; however, the al-Bashir regime, as it weakens its relations with Egypt, faces internal dispute with Sudanese political parties and forces. In addition, with its dubious support from Iran, it just might find itself isolated if it continues its uncalculated adventures.

Foreign Minister Receives Message From Sudan

NC1312131992 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1241 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 13 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has received a message from Sudanese Foreign Minister 'Ali Sahlul. The message was delivered today by Sudanese Ambassador in Cairo 'Izz-al- Din Hamid during a meeting with Foreign Minister Musa.

Ambassador Hamid said the message he handed Musa is part of the contacts and consultations between the two countries on matters affecting bilateral relations. The message emphasizes eagerness to strengthen these relations and remove any obstacles blocking their natural course.

He said there are principles and constants regarding Egyptian-Sudanese relations on which there is no disagreement. But there are issues that demand the continuation of contacts and dialogue to find solutions for them so they will not affect the natural course of these relations.

Regarding reports about Sudan's support for terrorists, Ambassador Hamid denied this and said this has not happened and will not happen. The ambassador affirmed in this regard that Sudan will not be a source of concern for Egypt.

Regarding the joint Egyptian-Sudanese committee, Ambassador Hamid said agreement has been reached in principle to hold a new meeting of the committee in Khartoum in January. He indicated that consultations will take place in this regard with Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs.

Asked about the Hala'ib issue, Ambassador Hamid said that an attempt will be made to resolve this issue through the channels of contact and dialogue between the two countries.

Evidence Implicates Sudan, Iran in Terrorism

NC1612123592 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1026 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 16 Dec (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—The security services have information and evidence that weapons have been smuggled from Sudan to the terrorist groups via the southern border, according to Major General Muhammad Hilmi Salih, first assistant interior minister for security. He said the Egyptian authorities recently have managed to abort many smuggling attempts, seizing weapons destined for extremists through routes and valleys on the Egyptian-Sudanese border. Maj. Gen. Salih addressed this message to Sudan: Take your hands off these operations so we can have good relations.

In an exclusive statement, the first assistant interior minister said Iran provides the extremists with money and weapons and uses the territory of a neighboring country—a reference to Sudan—as a center for meeting terrorist elements and drawing up plans to undermine Egypt's economy with a view toward weakening the country's role in the region. Tourism is being targeted at a time when the country is witnessing major achievements in the economic reform process, he said. He said recent incidents in Qina and Imbabah have revealed where the terrorists received the necessary funding. He asked: How can we explain the use of four machine guns, with a total price of 20,000 pounds, in the attack on the bus in Qina? Some 5,000 pounds in cash was found with the accused, as well. Where did these funds come from? Of course, he said, the confessions of the accused revealed their foreign contacts.

Major General Husayn Tawfiq, assistant interior minister and director of Aswan security, disclosed that a smuggler of arms from Sudan to the terrorist organizations in Upper Egypt had an appointment to receive a shipment of arms from Sudan to deliver to extremists. He is being interrogated to determine who supplied him with weapons in Sudan.

In the past few hours, security agencies succeeded in identifying the most important source for supplying the terrorists with forged passports and visas to help them escape abroad after committing their crimes. Major General 'Isam Najm, assistant interior minister for public funds investigations, had assigned Major General Faruq 'Abbas, director of forgery investigations, to look for the sources providing the extremists with the forged passports found in their hideouts in Imbabah, Alexandria, Hulwan, and 'Ayn Shams.

Head of Iranian Diplomatic Mission Still in Cairo

NC1312135692 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1258 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 13 Dec (MENA)—Sources at the Iranian diplomatic mission in Cairo have denied published reports about the departure of 'Ali Asghar Mohammadi, head of the Iranian interests section, to Tehran. The sources said he is still in Cairo.

It should be noted that the Egyptian Foreign Ministry recalled Ambassador Ahmad Namiq, head of the Egyptian mission in Tehran, for consultations following the Egyptian-Iranian dispute resulting from Iran's support for terrorists in several Arab countries and Iran's occupation of the Abu Musa, Tunb al-Sughra, and Tunb al-Kubra Islands, which belong to the United Arab Emirates [UAE].

Tension With Iran Reportedly Eased by al-Shar'

NC1612074192 Shamayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 0530 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] Egyptian-Iranian relations have eased thanks to the efforts of Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. Following the meeting of al-Shar' and the Egyptian president, in the presence of Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, Musa said the Egyptian and Iranian peoples have common interests and there is a need for bilateral relations on both regional and Islamic levels based on cooperation and noninterference by either side in the other's internal affairs.

According to the same sources [as heard], al-Shar' succeeded during his visit to Cairo in stopping media campaigns between Cairo and Tehran. He also obtained Egypt's agreement to hold a meeting between Egyptian and Iranian diplomats soon to discuss the bases for ending differences between the two countries.

Uzbek Officials Meet With Counterparts in Cairo

NC1212125792 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1112 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 12 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa conferred today with Uzbek Foreign Minister Ubaidulla Abdurrazaqov, who currently is visiting Cairo.

Speaking after the session, Abdurrazaqov stated that the Uzbek president will pay an official visit to Egypt on Tuesday at the invitation of President Husni Mubarak. He noted that the arrangements for the visit had been discussed during the meeting, adding that he hopes that the Uzbek president's visit and his talks with Mubarak will further promote bilateral relations between the two sisterly countries. The Uzbek foreign minister stressed his country's emphasis on the need to reach a peaceful solution to the Middle East and Palestinian questions on the basis of UN resolutions.

Abdurrazaqov called for resolving the problem in Bosnia-Hercegovina on the basis of Security Council resolutions. He noted that his country stresses noninterference in other countries' domestic affairs.

For his part, Musa noted that today's talks are in preparation for the visit of the Uzbek president. During this visit, he added, a number of agreements to bolster

economic, trade, and cultural cooperation will be signed. He emphasized that the visit will be particularly important in promoting relations between Egypt and Uzbekistan.

Musa on Uzbek President's Visit

NC1512170292 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has welcomed the visit to Egypt by Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov, adding that the visit and talks Karimov will hold with President Mubarak constitute an important step toward enhancing and bolstering bilateral relations, particularly in the economic and cultural fields.

Musa said that the two presidents will lay the foundations for stronger bilateral cooperation in various fields. He said that diplomatic relations will be established soon and that several agreements will be signed to bolster trade, cultural, and political cooperation.

Speaking to our radio, Musa said that the Egyptian and Iranian peoples are brothers and that regional and Islamic interests require the establishment of strong relations between the two countries based on international legitimacy, noninterference in each country's internal affairs, and positive relations that can help achieve stability and development in the region.

Musa said Egypt believes in the need to establish stability in Somalia, because it can never accept the fighting and discord that have prevailed among the factions of the Somali people. He said that Egypt and the international community are making efforts to end the Somali people's tragedy and achieve national accord and stability so that Somalia can play its role at the Arab, Islamic, and African levels.

Musa commented on the statement issued by the EC states at the end of their meeting in Edinburgh, particularly their support for a just settlement for the Palestinian issue. He said: Egypt welcomes the EC's support for the peace march and a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian problem. He added that this European support is significant, because it comes from influential states and agrees with the international support for a just settlement based on the land-for-peace formula so that a just and comprehensive peace can be established in the Middle East.

Mubarak, Karimov Address Banquet

NC1512195592 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1830 GMT 15 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 15 Dec (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak tonight hosted a dinner banquet in honor of Uzbek President Islam Karimov and his accompanying delegation, who are currently in Cairo. The banquet was held at the Presidential Palace in Heliopolis following a two-hour session of talks between the two presidents. Senior government officials attended the banquet.

In a dinner speech, Mubarak said that Islam is a religion of progress, refinement, tolerance, moderation, and goodness, a faith that rejects extremism and fanaticism, and a doctrine that could breathe vigor and vitality into the Muslim nations.

We work together to develop our societies, Mubarak stated. He voiced concern over the inhumane practices that occur in some societies that conflict with ideals that should reign in our world. He deplored attempts to revive ethnic and sectarian chauvinism and said that progress cannot be based on aggression or injustice. President Mubarak called on all states that engage in such practices to reconsider their attitude and refrain from acts of repression and persecution.

Here is the text of Mubarak's speech:

Your Excellency President Islam Karimov, dear guests: It is my pleasure and privilege to welcome you here in Egypt as dear friends and faithful partners. Together we share the common objectives of security and peace. We aspire to consolidate stability in our countries and regions, knowing that stability is essential for the success of our national efforts to achieve comprehensive economic and social development. Our people seek to enhance cooperation and interaction among various world nations at a time of unprecedented and fast-breaking international events.

Our meeting acquires added importance because the Middle East and Central Asia face similar challenges, share common interests, and attract much attention from international powers because of their strategic importance and the specific phase of development that they are going through.

There is no doubt that we have had strong links for centuries. The spiritual values we have in common, the common contribution we made to culture and civilization, the particular role we played in narrowing the gap between different cultures and views are among these links. What we have in common is a belief in the unity of human society, goal, and destiny.

We share the belief that Islam is a religion of progress, refinement, tolerance, and moderation; a faith that seeks equality among people of diverse ethnic and sectarian background; a doctrine of righteousness that rejects extremism and fanaticism, frowns upon divisions and enmity, and seeks to turn the Islamic people into an effective and influential force, a force that opens up to other nations and interacts with them for the sake of serving common human objectives.

President Mubarak added: We work together to develop our societies and economies in a way that suits our circumstances and requirements and conforms to our conditions and the goals we have set for our struggle

along the path of peace, development, and progress, away from interventions and foreign ambitions. By this, alone, will the new cultural creation reflect our identity and interests and respond to the hopes of our peoples and their legitimate aspirations, in an age when several other peoples are making a quantum leap toward modernizing methods of agricultural and industrial production, developing services, and acquiring modern technology in all walks of life. This makes it incumbent upon us to make tangible progress at the cultural and technological levels at the same time and to safeguard our efforts and resources and to prevent them from being wasted on unsubstantiated and unjustified marginal disputes. They are a trust in our hands and a responsibility that we bear to guarantee the present and build for the future.

Mr. President, we feel sorrow and concern at the inhuman practices taking place in some communities in areas that are of particular interest to us. Such practices totally conflict with the values that must prevail in the world during this important stage of its history. They seek to revive racist and ethnic feelings that have resulted in many tragedies and grief in the past and that cannot do any party good, because progress cannot be built on aggression and injustice.

Thus, we call on the parties involved in such practices to reconsider their conduct and stop the acts of repression and persecution they carry out due to racial or ethnic fanaticism. Such acts will leave painful marks and further deepen the gap among peoples at a time when we urgently need to fill gaps and close ranks to face the difficult challenges and increasing dangers.

Dear brothers and friends, it was a pleasure for us to meet with brother President Islam Karimov and his colleagues, talk to them about developing cooperation and interaction between our peoples and countries in various fields, and coordinating our joint steps toward justice and good. Allow me to invite you to rise in salute of brother President Karimov, the friends from the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as the relations of solidarity and amity between our two countries and our great peoples.

President Islam Karimov also delivered a speech in which he praised the strong ties between his country and Egypt. He said Uzbekistan regards friendly ancient Egypt with all appreciation.

He added that only one year after the independence of Uzbekistan, 120 states have already recognized it. He expressed his hope that full diplomatic relations with Egypt will be established soon.

Noting good intentions, mutual respect, and joint work, Karimov stressed confidence that Uzbek-Egyptian cooperation serves the interests of both countries. He said he hopes bilateral relations will be strengthened in all fields.

Following is the text of President Islam Karimov's speech:

Your excellency, the esteemed president, ladies and gentlemen: First of all, allow me to express my warmest and heartfelt thanks for His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak for his invitation for us to visit Egypt, an ancient and young country at the same time.

The appreciation, respect, and hospitality extended to me personally and to all members of the accompanying delegation provide the basis for a talk about the sincere, fraternal, and mutual feelings of the two peoples. Our history, culture, religion, and much of our material and moral relations have deep common roots.

It can be said that these roots supply our present life with new concepts such as good neighborliness, peaceful and cordial coexistence, citizens' safety, and high morale.

Over the ages, and despite many artificial barriers, the exchange of cultural and human wealth between us continued. Today, through our visit, we managed to add to this exchange an extremely powerful factor. We can learn much from each other. The Uzbek people look upon friendly Egypt, with its ancient culture, with all appreciation. I am confident that Egypt's future will be bright.

Only one year has passed since our young state was established. Yet, Uzbekistan made strides that can be measured by dozens of years. This is not our own assessment, but that of others.

Some 120 countries have recognized Uzbekistan, and diplomatic relations at embassy levels have been established with more than 60 states.

I am fully confident that the Egyptian ambassador will soon become one of the dearest guests of Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan is joining the international family with active steps. Evidence of this is Uzbekistan's acceptance as a member of the United Nations, the World Bank, the IMF, and other international organizations.

What is the reason for such a recognition of Uzbekistan on the part of the international family? What is the reason for the increased interest in Uzbekistan on the part of businessmen, intellectuals, and artists? There are many reasons; however, the primary one is the fact that Uzbekistan has chosen its course and path toward independence and development by relying on its old and modern culture, its moral heritage in general, the resources under and on its soil, its people with their open hearts who love work and who rely on their own efforts, and on its young generation that has embarked on life with active steps. This course is strengthened by the clear and tangible program for building a democratic modern state; by this road toward applying the market economy; and finally by this course toward having the main interest focused on man, his freedom, prosperity, and safety.

We drew up Uzbekistan's new constitution one week ago. All these major principles are included in it. We are sincere supporters of establishing lasting peace all over the world.

We want the principles of respect, noninterference in internal affairs, and the settlement of any conflicts or problems only through peaceful means to prevail. We are exerting our utmost efforts and abilities to ensure peace and stability in neighboring countries.

Out of deep respect and appreciation for Egypt's history, culture, people, and future, we are ready to conclude new bilateral agreements that will help bring our two countries and peoples closer together beside the documents already signed during this visit.

I am fully confident that a great future is in store for Uzbek-Egyptian cooperation that will serve our two countries' interests and prosperity.

As a result of our good intentions, mutual respect, and effective participation, relations between Tashkent and Cairo could become an example of our joint cooperation and solidarity in all the spheres of our lives. The road we are building with our own joint efforts will narrow the gaps and vast distances between the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa.

I would like to thank once again his excellency the president, his excellency the prime minister, and all members of the Egyptian leadership for their appreciation, respect, good hospitality and reception.

Qatari Envoy Conveys Amir's Message to Mubarak

NC1412103392 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1014 GMT 14 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 14 Dec (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Qatari Ambassador to Cairo Badr 'Umar al-Daf' this morning. Following the meeting, the Qatari ambassador said that he conveyed to President Mubarak an oral message from Qatari Amir Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani dealing with developments on the Gulf and Arab scenes.

The Qatari ambassador declined to answer a question on the Qatari-Saudi dispute and another on whether Qatar will attend the coming Gulf Cooperation Council summit in Abu Dhabi.

Foreign Minister Meets With South Asian Envoys

NC1412192492 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1829 GMT 14 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 14 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held a meeting this evening in Cairo with the ambassadors of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives, and Bhutan, who are members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

Musa explained at the meeting Egypt's efforts to advance the region's peace process based on the land-for-peace principle and restoration of the Palestinian people's rights.

The foreign minister stressed Egypt's concern to bolster economic ties with the group within the South-South cooperation and to enhance relations between the Egyptian private sector and these countries through their businessmen to contribute to the implementation of joint projects and to achieve development.

Delegation Returns From 'Successful' Paris Visit

NC1312055992 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2210 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 12 Dec (MENA)—People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Fathi Surur and his accompanying parliamentary delegation returned to Cairo this evening from Paris after a five-day visit to France.

Dr. Surur stated upon his return that the Egyptian parliamentary delegation's visit to France was successful. During the visit, he added, they exchanged viewpoints with the members of the French National Assembly and Senate on various political and economic issues of interest to the two countries.

Ministers Approve Accords With Libya, U.S.

NC1212134892 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] At a meeting today under the chairmanship of Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi, the Council of Ministers endorsed a number of economic and technical cooperation agreements between Egypt and some fraternal and friendly states. These include an agreement by which the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development will grant Egypt 51 million dinars to reclaim 400,000 feddans in northern Sinai and a second agreement by which the Saudi Development Fund will grant Egypt 94 million riyals to finance the irrigation canal necessary for the reclamation of the above-mentioned areas.

This was stated by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif, who added that the cabinet also endorsed three agreements between Egypt and the Libyan Jamahiriyah on legal matters, maritime transport, and cargo and passengers transport.

The Council of Ministers also approved an agreement between Egypt and France to complete Qasr al-'Ayni Hospital, as well as the financial protocol signed between the two countries last October on a French grant of 589 million francs.

The cabinet also endorsed the exchanged letter between Egypt and Italy, by which Italy will grant Egypt 10 billion liras to subsidize health services in al-Daqahliyah and al-Buhayrah Governorates.

The information minister added that the agreements include one between Egypt and the United States on a grant to support irrigation systems and another agreement on completing financing of the second phase of the Greater Cairo sewage project. Another two agreements with the United States were approved. The first concerns a special grant for the science and technology project, and the second concerns a grant to support the Egyptian economic reform program.

Asyut Security Chief Details 'Intense' Campaign

NC1312145592 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1332 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Asyut, 13 Dec (MENA)—Security authorities in Asyut Governorate, Upper Egypt, have resumed their intense campaigns to arrest extremists and terrorists and seize unlicensed weapons used by these elements in a number of the governorate's villages and towns.

Major General 'Abd-al-Wahab al-Hilali, assistant minister of interior and director of Asyut security, has said that Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa has issued instructions to continue these campaigns to prevent weapons from reaching these elements, arrest them, and eliminate their sources of weapons and ammunitions.

In a statement to MENA, al-Hilali said the security forces' raid on Mijris in Markaz Sidfa resulted in the seizure of 16 automatic rifles, five German-made rifles, and 1,500 7.62-mm bullets, including tracer and incendiary bullets. Ten people from al-Zawayid and Awlad Rayyan clans were arrested for feudal disputes and referred to prosecution for investigation.

Al-Hilali added that a man named Khalid Ahmad Salim, 24, who has a business diploma and is the leader of the extremist groups in al-Quziyah, was arrested during the campaigns and found in possession of antiregime leaflets, about 300 cassettes, which are being checked, and lists of names of some extremists.

He noted that these lists helped in the arrest of four extremists. An ambush on the road leading to Manfalut resulted in the arrest of an arms trader with a dangerous record who was carrying two automatic rifles he planned to sell. Al-Hilali said the security authorities are conducting an investigation to arrest the people who were going to buy the two rifles.

Al-Hilali added that another ambush in Manfalut has resulted in the arrest of one of the most dangerous arms dealer in the region, a fugitive who escaped several cases and who supplied the terrorists and extremists with their requirements of weapons and ammunitions to carry out their operations.

Concluding his statement, al-Hilali asserted that the security campaigns will continue in various regions in Asyut to arrest the extremists, seize their weapons, and foil their plans to disrupt peace and stability.

Libya

Crown Prince in Exile Interviewed

PM1112125592 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Dec 92 p 4

[Report on interview with Libyan Crown Prince in exile Muhammad al-Hasan al-Rida al-Senussi by Bisheerah Shirbil and 'Ali al-Raz in London "yesterday"]

[Text] London—Libyan Crown Prince Muhammad al-Hasan al-Rida al-Senussi has called on Libyans "inside and outside Libya to celebrate the independence anniversary on 24 December and express their happiness at this occasion in all available ways to show their adherence to legitimacy and the Constitution and their rejection of autocracy."

In an interview with AL-HAYAH yesterday he said that "the ideal system for Libya is the monarchy system, which helps solve problems. It is the system by which my father, may God's mercy be upon him, in a test under which Libyans—whatever the reasons for their differences—seek refuge." He pointed to his belief that "the next monarchy in Libya will be a constitutional monarchy, and power under it will be in the people's hands, that is, through an elected parliament."

The present regime in Libya, he said, is "not a regime, without naming its members. What concerns us is that the destiny of all the people is controlled by one individual, even if he unfortunately claims that it is a people's regime based on people's councils. Reality, practice, and application indicate that there is no one who can disagree with that individual."

He said: "I consider myself and my family the property of the Libyan people as a whole, including the elements working within the regime. And I respect all the groups opposed to the existing strange situation and put my hand in theirs, whatever the reactions, negative or positive." He pointed out that his role as a crown prince "is a meeting point for all Libyans inside and outside the country. And I believe that the opposition abroad should complement the opposition march inside and be a support for it."

On his opinion of the UN demand that Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's regime hand over the Lockerbie case suspects, Prince Muhammad said: "We respect the UN resolutions, since Libya is a UN member and its independence came through the international organization's recognition."

And he emphasized that "the Libyan people reject terrorism by nature, and so does the Islamic religion. And I believe that under a new regime Libya will establish good relations with all world states on the basis of mutual interests and in accordance with international resolutions and charters, provided that this does not conflict

with higher Libyan interests stipulated by our Constitution. As for our relations with the Arab and Islamic nations, they are governed by Arab, Islamic, and humanitarian principles."

On his visualization of change, he said: "It is the people who lead change. The Al-Sanusis are part of this people and do not impose themselves on them. And if the Al-Sanusis' return is a people's demand for the nation, no one can obstruct it." He pointed out that his contacts with Libyans inside the country are continuing. He emphasized the nonexistence of contacts with leaders of the present regime. As for the dialogue with the opposition, "Al-Sanusi's house is open to every individual of the Libyan people, in the past, at present, and in the future."

Asked whether he would participate in a developed formula of the regime called for by Col. al-Qadhdhafi, Prince Muhammad said: "We do not participate in a regime which we regard as illegitimate in the first place." Asked whether he would participate in a transitional government if the regime is changed in preparation for parliamentary elections, he replied: "We are a meeting point for all, and on this basis we believe that the Constitution's return means legitimacy's return."

He stressed that monarchy in Libya belongs to the Al-Sanusi family. "We inherit it from our forefathers. As for the political situation, it is determined by other conditions. And it is the Libyan will which determines our return to serve the nation." On amendment of the Constitution he said: "It is the people who will decide that through a people's referendum."

He expressed his belief "in plans that emanate from the conscience of the people's representatives elected under the Constitution (it was promulgated in 1951), which we view it as a pioneer experiment very useful for preparing a new Libyan future. Without doubt many internal and external changes have occurred over 41 years, and these must be taken into account, namely through the next elected parliament. This is because the Constitution is not a final word. What we regard as a final commitment is the Libyan people's right to live in freedom and dignity. This is why the amendment process should be conducted after the parliamentary elections. As for preparing a constitution at the present time, it conflicts with the principle of the democracy in which we believe as a means of restoring the people's rights and decision-making through an elected parliament."

And he warned "about a real threat threatening the Libyan homeland's unity and people—that is, the partition threat, to which the sincere have to be alert. They should be ready to confront it by consolidating their unity, forgetting their differences, and abandoning limited interests and placing Libya's interests above everything." And he believes that "the objective conditions which Libya has reached contribute to further division and disagreement and prepare the situation for partition. Thus I call on all to shoulder their responsibilities, suspend any disagreements, and forget grudges, even with regard to those deemed to contain prisoners under the regime."

Ship To Bring 1,000 Children From Bosnia

LD1312141992 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] The National General Company for Maritime Transport wishes to inform the brother travellers that, as part of the Great Jamahiriyah's humanitarian role, it has been decided to send the national ship Grenada on a special trip to Croatia to bring 1,000 children from Bosnia-Herzegovina to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Hence the ship's trip to Morocco and Tunisia scheduled for 14 December is postponed. The brother travelers who were scheduled to sail on it are requested to contact the reservation offices to find out the next departure times for the trip to Tunisia and Morocco.

Sudan

Reports of Iranian Troops Said Exaggerated

AB1312104592 Paris AFP in English 1021 GMT 13 Dec 92

[By Clarisse Lucas]

[Excerpts] Khartoum, Dec 13 (AFP)—Reports of Iranian troops helping Sudan's government suppress its southern rebels are exaggerated, former prime minister Sadek el-Mahdi told AFP. [passage omitted]

"Their relations are superficial and both of them are fundamentalists but in opposite directions," said Mahdi, who was ousted in 1989 by Sudan's current hardline Islamic military regime.

Mahdi, the last head of a democratic Sudanese government denied Tehran had sent soldiers or its much-feared elite Revolutionary Guards to the country. [passage omitted]

For his part Hasan al-Turabi, "spiritual leader" of the Khartoum regime, said: "There are very few links between Sudan and Iran. Simply, as both countries are undergoing Islamization they have common preoccupations."

Fears of Iranian involvement in the northern African state were sparked by the visit last December to Khartoum by Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He signed economic and technology cooperation deals and agreed to finance Sudanese arms purchases, notably from China. [passage omitted]

Mahdi also played down Egyptian claims that Iran is behind its Islamic unrest, saying Egyptian problems with Moslem fundamentalists were home-grown. Sudan was "too weak and too confused to export revolution," he added. [passage omitted]

Commentary on Human Rights, Iranian Presence

EA1512203092 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1315 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Western enmity against Sudan and the revolution has continued to interest the numerous western media which accuse Sudan of extremism and violation of human rights. The developing relations between Sudan and Iran are not spared either, with Sudan being accused of bringing in Iranian forces. However, Sudan could have done anything if it remained within the orbit of the West. The radio commentary today revolves around this topic. It was written by Hasan al-Rasul Basnaja and will be read by 'Umar 'Abd-al-Karim.

The national salvation revolution has often been tested in its steadfastness and reactions but our consolation is that by these tests, which forced it to take many sacrifices on both the internal and external levels, the revolution has risen to the level of the great revolutions which invite the gathering of enemies hostile to them. Such revolutions are moving on the correct paths which disturb them and give them no comfort. When we look at the challenges facing the revolution we find that they are great. However, most of them are contrived by plotters who have excelled in such activities.

They are exploiting a number of issues, one of them being human rights. However, the brilliance of this accusation has now begun to fade under the rays of truth. The UN condemnation now appears as a good thing for Sudan. It has made Sudan seek earnestly the gaps [as heard] through which condemnation emerges. It is regrettable that these accusations come from Sudanese—some from the rebel movement and some from those who say they are opposed to the revolution and are living abroad.

It is even more regrettable that an organization like the United Nations should rely on information from them which has been confirmed to be weak and untruthful.

It is obvious that the opposition is in collusion with all the forces working against Sudan and this is shown by the fact they have welcomed in their foreign clubs the condemnation of Sudan and then issued their own condemnations in the same direction without shame and without any patriotic deterrents. Their obsessive desire for power means that they do not differentiate between the homeland and the government. Indeed, some opposition figures have demanded that the United States intervene in the Jibal al-Nubah area because the government is indulging, according to the their claims, in ethnic cleansing. Since they are determined to oppose the revolution some of them have displayed the map of Sudan without Hala'ib to satisfy the comfortable chairs they have continued to find outside the country.

One of their fabrications concerns Sudan's relations with Islamic Iran. Although these are normal relations posing no threat to any other state, the plotters' web will not be complete without imaginary tales about the presence of Iranian forces fighting alongside the government forces in the South. The imaginary tales went further and said that the rebel movement had captured some men of the Iranian forces. The talk about the Iranian forces has been rejected not only by Sudan but even by western diplomats who are watching events from close range in Khartoum.

AFP confirmed in a report, published by AL-INQADH AL-WATANI, that there is no trace of any Iranian presence in Sudan. It went on to quote a diplomat who said that he saw no reason for Sudan to call on the Iranians who know nothing about the geographical nature of southern Sudan. AFP also quoted another diplomat as saying that he had been informed by a Sudanese minister that the Sudanese government had found it difficult to implement the agreements concluded with Iran and that none of the agreements had been implemented yet.

Thus the claims facing the national salvation revolution are collapsing day after day under the blows of those regarded as its foes. The revolution will proceed with the knowledge that it is being tested by different challenges because it is on the right track—that of the Sudanese people.

'Extremists' Earmark $100 Million for Operations

NC1212211792 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1916 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Cairo, 12 Dec (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—The extremist fundamentalist groups have allocated $100 million as an initial budget for the general secretariat of the so-called Islamic Popular Arab Congress [al-mu'tamar al-'arabi al-sha'bi al-islami], which was established in Khartoum under Dr. Hasan al-Turabi. The new budget aims to support the conference efforts to undermine domestic fronts and pave the way for the extremist groups to seize power in various Arab countries. A fundamentalist group that invests in the United States shipped a large number of modern computers and facsimile machines to the general secretariat of the conference, which is using the Youths and Children Palace in Khartoum as a permanent headquarters.

Tunisia

Army To Participate in Operation in Somalia

LD1212183092 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Within the context of Tunisia's desire to help the Somali people escape the crisis they are experiencing, and in fulfillment of its humanitarian role, the president has decided that Tunisia will participate in the multinational force currently deployed in Somalia. Tunisia will send a unit from the National Army, supported by a medical team, to contribute towards alleviating the suffering of these Arab African people who are related to the Tunisian people through ties of fraternity and solidarity.

Ben Yahya Comments on Various Foreign Issues

NC1312123392 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1034 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Excerpts] Cairo, 13 Dec (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya has emphasized that Sudan remains the primary base supporting extremists and terrorists and called on Sudan's leaders to renounce this policy. The following is the text of the dialogue that AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY conducted with him following the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] summit in Nouakchott: [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] The air embargo against Libya, a AMU member, is still in force, but the Maghreb summit did not pass a resolution supporting Libya; why? Are there specific steps to lift the embargo soon?

[Ben Yahya] The UN resolutions are binding on everyone, and they were applied by the Arab Maghreb countries. But these countries tried and are trying to lift the embargo through political and diplomatic contacts with the countries concerned. I will speak specifically about Tunisia, which since the start of the crisis has worked hard to prevent any heightening of tension in the region. In consultation with Egypt, Tunisia has made diligent endeavors with the various parties to find a peaceful and just solution to this question within the context of respect for international legality. We are optimistic about the prospects for a settlement, but it is premature to speak of specific steps because contacts are continuing with the countries concerned as well as with the Security Council members.

[Correspondent] It seems that Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria have common concerns regarding the fundamentalists. Is there cooperation and coordination among the three governments to contain this situation?

[Ben Yahya] Our problem is not with fundamentalists, but with terrorists hiding behind religion. Fundamentalism is not the threat against our societies; it is rather the departure from consensus, the sectarian extremism, the use of violence and terrorism, and the spread of sedition and division in the ranks of the nation. We in Tunisia have exerted all efforts and devised a solution that stems from the distinctive nature of our society and that responds to its aspirations. This solution puts together a series of options and values which we share with all Arab communities. Coordination exists among the aforesaid countries concerned to confront the extremist groups' activities. There is a plan and a working paper that will be debated at the meeting of the Arab interior ministers to be held soon. Regular meetings are held and an exchange of information exists among the security departments in the three countries, in addition to the extradition of defendants and terrorists.

[Correspondent] Diplomatic representation between Tunisia and Sudan remains suspended. Are there any positive steps to restore these relations, and do you have any preconditions in this respect?

[Ben Yahya] Sudan interfered in our internal affairs through its support of and assistance to terrorist elements hiding behind false religious slogans. Despite all our attempts to persuade Sudanese officials to desist from this hostile stand and despite their repeated promises that they would respond to this request, the Sudanese continued their support for the terrorist movement not only in Tunisia, but in several Arab and Islamic states. Sudan trains terrorist elements and supplies them with weapons and sabotage material. Sudan has become the main base of the terrorist league hiding behind religion. Our differences do not affect our fraternal feelings with the Sudanese people. Our differences are with the current leaders, whom we only ask to stop interfering in the affairs of others. If they do so, we will be the first to restore normal relations. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] The Palestinian president declared that he is ready to meet with [Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq] Rabin. He asked the Tunisian president that the meeting be held in Tunisia. It would be the first time that an Israeli prime minister has visited an Arab country in this manner. Is Tunisia really enthusiastic about such a meeting?

[Ben Yahya] The core of the Arab-Israeli conflict is the cause of the Palestinian people, who were robbed of their land and displaced from their homeland. Therefore, all our stands and initiatives aim at finding a peaceful solution that will enable these people to recover their legitimate rights. On this basis, we called for an international peace conference in January 1991. We also attended the Madrid talks. We support the inalienable and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. We support the brother Palestinians in anything they believe will settle their issue. We are ready to facilitate and help promote anything that serves the Palestinian issue and peace. If Yasir 'Arafat believes his meeting with Rabin is beneficial to the Palestinian issue, we do not object to hosting this meeting in Tunisia.

Islamic Terrorist Network Reportedly Dismantled

LD1312111792 Paris Radio France Internationale in French 0630 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Here is a statement by the Tunisian Interior Minister Abdallah Kallal, who while speaking before the Chamber of Deputies said that the terrorist network of the Islamic fundamentalists has been completely dismantled. Riga Bougheri reports:

[Bougheri] Kallal was careful to stress that even though the state controls the domestic situation, vigilance, and prudence should remain a priority because, as he said, the head of the hydra remains and it is abroad with ramifications everywhere in the world. According to the interior minister, the elements of the Tunisian [Islamic]

network are supported by secret funds and are continuously planning terrorism from their residences abroad. He regretted that they are continuing to enjoy greater freedom of maneuver in countries he did not name but which he described as friendly.

Last week during a rally in Tunis, Tunisian President Zine Ben Ali said that despite the presence of elements hostile to Tunisia on the French soil, the relations between the two countries remain unharmed. The Tunisian leaders had earlier accused Sudan and Algeria of harboring Tunisian extremists on their territory. Tunis, which has accused Sudan of giving a diplomatic passport to the leader of the Tunisian Islamists Rachid Ghannouchi, has gone as far as closing its embassy in Khartoum in protest.

* Text, Appendix of Yemen-Oman Border Agreement

93AE0168A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Oct 93 pp 1, 4, 7

[Article by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Haydari: "AL-HAYAH Publishes Text of Yemeni-Omani Border Agreement; First Appendix to Border Agreement Between Yemen and Sultanate of Oman on Regulating Border Authorities"]

[Text] Sanaa—The following is the text of the international border agreement concluded by the Republic of Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman this month in Sanaa. On page 7, AL-HAYAH has published the text of the two appendices attached to the agreement. The first deals with regulating the border authorities and the second with regulating pasture and travel rights and with utilization of water resources in the border area.

"The Republic of Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman, proceeding on the basis of the fraternal ties between them and of the common interest binding their two countries and peoples, enacting the noble Islamic sharī'ah, and motivated by the desire to strengthen the fraternal bonds and neighborly relations existing between the two sisterly countries;

And in view of the wish of both countries to delineate the border between them, the two contracting parties have agreed on the following:

Article 1. The border that separates the region of the Republic of Yemen and the region of the Sultanate of Oman shall be the line defined in Article 2 of this agreement and based on geodesic system 84.

Article 2. The border between the Republic of Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman shall begin at the main point of Ra's Darbah at the (rock) marked point 1 at the intersection of geographic coordinates of 16 degrees 39 minutes 3.83 seconds north latitude with 53 degrees 6 minutes 30.88 seconds east longitude. The line shall terminate at the main point marked point 8 at the geographic alignment of the intersection of 19 degrees north latitude with 52 degrees east longitude. The border line shall extend between the two main points whose coordinates are specified in the above and shall pass through points 2, 3, 4, 4A, 4B, 5, 6, and 7 according to the following coordinates:

- Point 2: At the intersection of 17 degrees 17 minutes 7.91 seconds north latitude with 52 degrees 48 minutes 44.22 seconds east longitude.
- Point 3: At the intersection of 17 degrees 17 minutes 40 seconds north latitude with 52 degrees 44 minutes 45 seconds east longitude.
- Point 4: At the intersection of 17 degrees 18 minutes 6.93 seconds north with 52 degrees 44 minutes 33.5 seconds east longitude.
- Point 4A, which supports point 4: At the intersection of 17 degrees 18 minutes 8.87 seconds north latitude with 52 degrees 44 minutes 34.24 seconds east longitude.
- Point 4B, which supports point 4: At the intersection of 17 degrees 18 minutes 8.42 seconds north with 52 degrees 44 minutes 35.57 seconds east longitude.
- Point 5: At the intersection of 17 degrees 18 minutes and 15 seconds north latitude with 52 degrees 45 minutes 5 seconds east longitude.
- Point number 6: At the intersection of 17 degrees 18 minutes 21 seconds north latitude with 52 degrees 45 minutes 2 seconds east longitude.
- Point number 7: At the intersection of 17 degrees 20 minutes 59.4 seconds north latitude with 52 degrees 46 minutes 55.83 seconds east longitude.

Article 3. The dividing line shall extend from the main point at the coast Ra's Dachat 'Ali in the direction of the territorial waters to the end of the economic point [al-nuqtah al-iqtisadiyah]. This stretch shall be determined in accordance with the rules of the international law and the UN agreement on sea law.

This demarcation of the land and sea border line between the two countries shall be firm and final.

Article 4. A joint technical committee shall be formed of the two countries' land survey authorities. The committee shall undertake the following tasks:

- Survey and determine on the spot the points and border spelled out in Article 2 and prepare final maps and other data connected with them and needed for this purpose so that these maps will become, after they are signed by the two parties' representatives, the new official maps for the border between the two countries and so that they will be appended as an indivisible part of this agreement.
- Supervise the placement of markers on the agreed line that separates the two countries' territories and agree on the distance between markers.

Article 5. All issues that emanate from the demarcation of the border and any other issues that surface afterward shall be settled cordially through direct communication between the two sides on the basis of the principle of equality, mutual benefit, and not damaging either side's interests.

Article 6. In case joint natural resources are discovered, it shall be agreed on how to utilize and share them in accordance with established international rules and traditions and the principles of justice and fairness.

Article 7. Border authorities, grazing and travel rights, and utilization of water resources in the border area shall be regulated in accordance with the two appendices attached to this agreement. Citizens' private property in the border area shall be utilized in accordance with a special appendix on which both sides agree. All appendices noted in this article shall be an indivisible part of this agreement.

Article 8. This agreement and its appendices have been written in two original copies in Arabic, and each country shall keep one of them.

Article 9. This agreement shall become effective after it is ratified in accordance with the procedures observed in each of the two contracting countries and after the instruments of ratification are exchanged by the two countries.

Article 10. This agreement was written in the City of Sanaa on 3 Rabi' al-Thani 1413 of the Hegira, corresponding to 1 October 1992.

On Behalf of the Sultanate of Oman: His Highness Shaykh Thuwayni Bin-Shihab al-Sa'id, the special representative of his majesty the sultan.

On behalf of the Republic of Yemen: Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, the prime minister.

First Appendix to Border Agreement

The Government of the Republic of Yemen and the Government of the Sultanate of Oman, in implementation of Article 7 of the international border agreement between the Republic of Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman, concluded on 3/4/1413 of the Hegira, corresponding to 1 October 1992, and out of their wish to regulate the powers of the border authorities, have agreed on the following:

Article 1. The two sides have agreed that disputes, violations, and incidents occurring in the border area covered by this appendix shall be settled in accordance with the provisions of this appendix.

Article 2:

1. The border area shall be the area extending from the borderline to a depth of 5 km within the territories of each side, starting at the common borderline between the two countries.

2. Neither side may build or maintain military fortifications, installations, or camps or similar facilities within the bounds of the area noted in paragraph 1 of this article, excluding official gateway and border guard installations. As soon as the border agreement between them goes into force, the two sides shall take the steps necessary to implement the rule decreed by this paragraph to already existing military fortifications, installations, and camps within an agreed period.

Article 3:

1. Each of the two contracting sides shall assign the border authorities listed below to implement the provisions of this appendix:

A. First-class border authorities:

- On behalf of the Republic of Yemen: Governor of the governorate concerned.
- On behalf of the Sultanate of Oman: The inspector general of police and customs.

B. Higher border authorities:

- On behalf of the Republic of Yemen: The minister of interior and security.
- On behalf of the Sultanate of Oman: The minister of interior.

2. The border authorities noted in paragraph 1 of this article may be replaced or other authorities may be created on agreement between the two contracting parties through diplomatic channels.

Article 4. Within one month of the date on which this appendix goes into effect, the two sides shall convey to each other through diplomatic channels all of the names of members of the border authorities, their positions, and a copy of the documents authorizing them. The authorization document shall include the photograph and signature of the authorized individual. Afterward, any change made in this regard shall be conveyed in the same manner.

Article 5. Every authorized member of the border authorities shall be entitled to appoint assistants, provided that he conveys their names and positions and the documents authorizing them to the other side's border authorities.

Article 6. Border violations and incidents that fall within the jurisdiction of the provisions of this appendix are:

A. Interfering with or destroying border markers or destroying other buildings or installations connected with the border directly.

B. Firing on border posts and guard, individuals, border markers, or border installations located within the other side's territory.

C. The escape of individuals charged with committing a crime in accordance with the law of the contracting party to which they belong in the border area and their taking refuge in the border area of the other contracting party.

D. Acts of plundering and looting committed by the citizens of one of the two contracting parties in the border area of the other party.

E. Smuggling activities carried out by one or more persons from the territories of one of the two contracting parties to the territories of the other party.

F. Hunting wildlife within the border area.

G. Misuse or pollution of the water resources and any act that impedes the use of these resources.

Article 7. The border authorities of each side shall have the following powers within their side of the border area:

A. Take the steps necessary to prevent the occurrence of incidents.

B. Take the necessary steps and notify the other side's border authorities to stop individuals from committing crimes, smuggling goods or infiltrating from the other side's border area, to prevent [illegal] border crossing, and to fight, pursue, and arrest such individuals if the need arises. In case such individuals cross the border line from the border area of one of the two contracting parties to the border area of the other contracting party, the pursuit shall be stopped, and the first side's border authority shall notify the other side's border authority.

which shall take the necessary steps to apprehend the individuals involved and hand them over to the first side's border authorities.

C. Take the steps necessary to prevent smuggling and infiltration across the two countries and exchange information on such activities between the border authorities so that they will fight these activities.

D. Exchange information in case of catastrophes in the border area and cooperate to confine them.

E. Take precautionary measures to stop the spread of epidemics, livestock diseases, and plant pests to the other side's territories. Toward this end, the border authority of the side in which an epidemic or animal disease develops shall notify the the other side's authority. In case it is suspected that a disease has developed among livestock, measures shall be taken to prevent the spread of the disease in accordance with the health and veterinary inspection regulations applied by each side.

F. Investigate all border incidents.

G. Settle disputes that may develop in connection with violations and incidents mentioned in Article 6 of this appendix and consider, within the bounds of their powers, demands for reparations submitted in the wake of border incidents by one of the two sides or by individuals living in the border area under their jurisdiction.

Article 8:

1. If a citizen of one side takes refuge in the other side's border area after committing a crime stipulated by the law of the side he belongs to, the border authority of the side where the crime is committed may request detention of the accused and the other side's border authority shall exert utmost efforts to apprehend the wanted individual and to inform the requesting border authority when he is apprehended.

2. The border authority of the side asked to apprehend the accused may extradite him during a maximum period of 10 days of the date on which the accused is apprehended.

3. If the border authority asked to apprehend the accused refuses to extradite him for any reason whatsoever within a period of 10 days, then it must keep the accused under detention until documents connected with the incident are delivered through diplomatic channels. In no case may the detention period exceed 60 days.

Article 9. On prior agreement, the border authorities may conduct a joint on-the-spot investigation of a border incident in order to confirm the facts. In this case, these authorities may, should the need arise, take experts and witnesses along with them. The investigation shall be supervised by the side in whose territory the investigation is conducted. A report shall be written on the investigation. It shall be signed by the authorities concerned, list briefly the facts, deliberations, and conclusions made by the investigation, and be referred to the judiciary authorities concerned.

Article 10. On joint agreement, the two sides shall fix the meeting points, the points for the exchange of messages, and the points for handing over individuals and property, and gateways.

Article 11. Members of the border authorities, their aides, and experts may cross the border to perform tasks emanating from the provisions of this appendix. Members of border authorities and their aides may cross the borders after displaying the authorization documents noted in Articles 4 and 5 of this appendix and after notifying the other side's authorities and getting their approval.

Article 12. The other side's nearest border post shall be notified at least 24 hours in advance of the day and hour the crossing will be made by the individuals who need to make it in accordance with the provisions of this appendix. This period may be reduced in cases of utmost necessity on agreement between the two contracting sides.

Article 13. While performing their duty, members of the border authorities shall enjoy the immunity they need to perform their duties. Items that they need for this purpose shall not be subject to taxes and customs fees.

Article 14. Individuals noted in Article 9 of this appendix shall be given the necessary assistance during their presence in the border area of either side.

Article 15:

1. The border authorities noted in paragraph 1-A of Article 3 of this appendix shall meet alternately in the territory of each of the two sides once every six months or whenever the need calls for meeting, on agreement between the two sides, to settle issues within their jurisdiction. If these authorities do not succeed in settling these issues, then they shall be referred to the border authorities mentioned in paragraph 1-B of Article 3 of this appendix so these authorities will decide what they deem fit on these issues.

2. The border authorities noted in paragraph 1-B of Article 3 of this appendix shall meet alternately in each side's territory once a year or if the border authorities mentioned in paragraph 1-A of Article 3 of this appendix propose that the former hold a special meeting to consult on and settle issues pending.

Article 16:

1. To maintain and preserve the border markers, the two countries border authorities mentioned in paragraph 1-A of Article 3 of this appendix shall exchange information on these markers and shall check them on the spot before convocation of the semiannual meeting noted in paragraph 1 of Article 15 of this appendix to discuss the issue

and to submit reports on these markers to the border authorities noted in paragraph 1-B of Article 3 of this appendix.

2. If the border authorities noted in paragraph 1-B of Article 3 of this appendix find that locations of the border markers have been altered or that the markers need to be restored or repaired as a result of damage, they shall notify the agency concerned on both sides to take the technical steps necessary to return the markers to their location or to restore or repair them according to the technical specifications agreed on in the minutes of the technical committee noted in Article 4 of the international border agreement between the two countries and approved by this committee.

Article 17. This appendix shall be valid for five years as of the date on which the agreement goes into force and it shall renew automatically for the same duration, unless one side notifies the other, through diplomatic channels and six months before the end of the set period, of its wish to amend it.

Article 18. This appendix shall become effective upon its ratification in accordance with the procedures observed in the two countries and after its instruments of ratification are exchanged between the two governments.

Written in the City of Sanaa on 3 Rabi' al-Thani 1413 of the Hegira, corresponding to 1 October 1992.

On behalf of the Government of the Sultanate of Oman: His Highness Thuwayni Bin-Shihab Al Sa'id, special representative of his majesty the sultan.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Yemen: Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, the prime minister.

Bahrain

Amir on Plans To Form Consultative Council

JN1612101192 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0530 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Excerpt] Manama, 16 Dec (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of the State of Bahrain, has emphasized the determination of Bahrain—government and people—to cope with the present age and its new and advanced developments as it did in the past in more difficult circumstances.

In a speech marking the 21st anniversary of Bahrain's national day today, he said that the energies of the educated Bahraini youths and of its civilized and productive people will overcome all difficulties and realize hopes.

His highness said that based on Bahraini vitality and capabilities, the national internal front represents the basis for self-construction, which is the most important asset in the face of external events and changes.

His highness stressed that Bahrain is determined to form a consultative council in the country, which will include the elite of the homeland's sincere men who are efficient and experienced in various fields of national action, in order to share in giving advice and opinion. This will be carried out in accordance with the tolerant Islamic tradition of consultation in order to entrench our national march, and assist the state and its establishments in working out the plans, policies, and programs relating to the government activities, and to consider its march and performance.

His highness the amir of Bahrain hoped that the new experiment in national action would have positive encouraging results in general and would contribute toward further future development. [passage omitted]

Qatar

Foreign Minister Leaves for Saudi Arabia 15 Dec

JN1512145892 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1020 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Doha, 15 Dec (WAKH)—Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabhur Al Thani left Doha today for Jeddah on a visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia

Qatar Reportedly To Participate in Gulf Summit

JN1512182092 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Dec 92

['Abdallah al-Shihri dispatch from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia]

[Excerpt] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia this evening in Jeddah received Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin- Jasim Bin-Jabhur Al Thani, who conveyed to the king a message from Qatari Amir Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani. The contents of the message have not been disclosed, but well-informed sources told our radio that it deals with resolving the border dispute between Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques described this dispute as a summer cloud, asserting the Kingdom's concern for clearing the air between the two sides and resolving any differences cordially.

The Qatari minister left Jiddah after his meeting with King Fahd, without making any statements to the press. However, several sources here told our radio that Qatar will participate in the Gulf summit to be held in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates on Monday [21 December] after boycotting several recent Gulf ministerial meetings. [passage omitted]

Western Report on Rift With Ulema Rejected

LD1412185492 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1430 GMT 14 Dec 92

[Text] The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has refuted the allegations spread by malicious elements in some

Western media. This was set out in a statement to SPA by a responsible source who said:

We have been reading recently with great astonishment what some of the Western media organs are saying, and they include the Voice of America and the radio of London, which quote the British SUNDAY TIMES claims about the existence of a dispute between the Government of the Kingdom and the religious institutions.

The source said: It is regrettable that these media organs should carry what they receive from some sources that do not probe facts or ignore facts in order to deepen the distortion and cast doubts.

The source added: All that THE SUNDAY TIMES said in its issue of yesterday, in the way of fabricated claims about their eminences the members of the Council of Senior Ulemas, who had received the thanks of the custodian of the two holy mosques, are totally untrue. It is because there are no reasons other than what has been stated in the telegrams of thanks, namely that the senior ulemas' health circumstances no longer permit them to continue working.

It is worth mentioning that their eminences the ulemas who received the thanks of the custodian of the two holy mosques are at the center of appreciation from all because they are among the best people, whether from the standpoint of their knowledge, their work, or their weight in the affairs of religion, and they have to their credit weighty services that are acknowledged with thanks and appreciation.

The source added: As to the report broadcast yesterday by the Voice of America which was attributed to the female correspondent in Riyadh, the content of that report was far from the facts and the truth. The author of the report and her sources forgot that since its founding, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has established its foundations with guidance from God's book and the teaching of his messenger—may blessings and prayers be upon him—and that in the Islamic faith to the teachings of which the Kingdom—the King, government, and people—are always eager to adhere in both letter and spirit and in all religious and worldly affairs, are all the sources of good and success for mankind, and all that protects the dignity of man and ensures his rights. The author of the report is also unaware of the strong cohesion between the state and the men of knowledge, the students of knowledge, and also between the state and the sons of this homeland who are active within the framework of the single family that rallies around its leader in all that serves religion, the homeland, and all that brings good to the individual and society.

The source concluded the statement, saying: Some days ago the Kingdom played host to well over 300 media correspondents from various states of the world at the convening of the extraordinary sixth session of the ICO foreign ministers. All of them witnessed the glittering facts and saw the honorable reality of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They returned to their homelands, carrying with them the best memories of this dear country.

Yemen

Prime Minister Reportedly Submits Resignation

PM151216529? London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Dec 92 pp 1, 4

['Abd-al-Rahman al-Haydari and Iqbal 'Ali 'Abdallah report: "Al-'Attas Submits Resignation; Reports of Al-Bid Seclusion"]

[Excerpt] Sanaa, Aden, Ta'izz—A souce near the Yemen premiership has confirmed that Prime Minister Engineer Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas has submitted his resignation. But it is not known whether or not the Presidential Council has accepted the resignation.

The weekly newspaper AL-HAQQ said yesterday, Sunday, said that Al-'Attas submitted his resignation to the Presidential Council on Saturday because of "current conditions and the government's inability to run the country's affairs in view of the struggle over power."

The newspaper said that the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] Politburo held a meeting Saturday evening to resolve this matter. The newspaper emphasized that 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Yemeni vice president and secretary general of the YSP Central Committee, has secluded himself in his house. The reasons for this seclusion are still unknown. [passage omitted]

Government Adopts Political, Economic Measures

LD151221492 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] The joint meeting of the Presidential Council and the Council of Ministers continued its work today under brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council. During the meeting, conferees continued discussions on the topics on the agenda concerning current developments in the national arena in light of the regrettable incidents resulting from the recent disturbances, acts of violence, and sabotage in the capital and a number of cities in the Republic. Participants in the joint meeting also discussed the results of Council of Ministers' meetings during the past three days and the Council of Ministers' letter to the brother chairman and members of the Presidential Council, dated 13 December 1992, regarding the issues of prices and wages and proposed measures to achieve security, improve citizens' living conditions, consolidate the capabilities of the national economy, augment and improve public revenues, and expedite the process of national reconstruction and reform.

In light of a commitment to the contents of the political communique and constitutional declaration issued on 14 November 1992, the joint meeting discussed ways of promoting the atmosphere of confidence and understanding among all political forces in the national arena in a manner that provides an atmosphere of political stability and enhances the one political will to achieve our people's national aspirations.

At the conclusion of its business, the joint meeting of the Presidential Council and the Council of Ministers approved the following decisions and measures:

First: The joint meeting approves the Council of Ministers' letter to the Presidential Council on 13 December 1992 concerning wages and prices and the proposed ways of gradual tackling the current economic situation in such a way that reduces the budget deficit, increases revenues, and curbs inflation. Appreciating the difficulties facing the government, the Presidential Council urges all state institutions and organs to expedite work and production patterns, and improve the level of administrative and productive performance in all fields. It urges all political parties and organizations and mass organizations to assume their responsibilities and national duty toward bringing home to the masses our country's difficult economic circumstances, and to exercise their rights in a peaceful and democratic manner away from all erroneous practices that harm democratization and national interests.

Second, the political area: 1. The joint meeting has expressed its deep regret over the riots, violence, vandalism, and looting that have claimed victims and damaged public property, commercial stores, and private property. The meeting further condemned these deplorable incidents that do a disservice to our country's democratic opinion. It has been decided to form a fact-finding committee comprising a number of brother cabinet ministers to keep track of the investigations into the incidents. All efforts will be channeled toward creating a correct and positive climate for holding the general parliamentary elections scheduled for 27 April 1993. The elections will receive priority attention from all government and state agencies. In the interest of a fair contest through the ballot box, all political parties and organizations in the country are urged to make every effort they possibly can. This is to ensure that the citizens exercise their democratic rights and put into practice the principle of the peaceful rotation of power.

2. There should be a commitment to the implementation of the timetable for a national program and political, economic and bureaucratic reform in all spheres of work and production. All efforts and energies must be devoted toward ensuring the success of this experiment.

3. Vigorous action must be taken to give impetus to and quicken the pace of the dialogue between the Yemeni Socialist Party and the General People's Congress to promote the highest degree of cooperation, so as to guarantee a joint vision and common will as to the national missions and goals.

4. All political parties and organizations will be asked to hold a conference to produce a code of honor for political action that should set out the national objectives to which all of the political parties and political and popular organizations must be bound within the democratic practice. This is to advance the cause of national unity and national accord in the country, and to promote the right climate for parliamentary elections.

5. Vituperations must be banned from official newspapers and those of the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party. Legal action will be taken against all those who engage in vituperation in party and private newspapers. There will also be a ban on compromising the country's sovereignty, and the Press and Print Publication Law must be strictly observed.

6. Activating the Parties Committee and adopting necessary, urgent measures to guarantee the implementation of the Parties and Political Organizations Law.

Third, in the economic area: 1. Strengthening control over prices, decided in 1992, for basic commodities—wheat, flour, and rice—and adopting firm and swift legal measures against violators. The Higher Judiciary Council will instruct courts and judges to deal swiftly with violations in the field of supply.

2. Continuing government financing of the importation of wheat, flour, rice, basic medicines for public hospitals, and raw materials for manufacturing basic medicines. The competent parties will set and control prices for these commodities for 1993 based on world prices.

3. Reinforcing and activating the Price and Price Control Organ to enable it to price necessary commodities, as defined by the Council of Ministers, to prevent tampering with their prices.

4. Government and public sector workers will be given an increase in the basic salary of the first step of the degree as follows:

Forty percent as a cost of living allowance, in addition to the current cost of living allowance. All other increases and illegal allowances will be canceled in all departments of the government.

Thirty-percent transportation allowance, and all other allowances related to transportation, shall be canceled.

5. Retired employees will be given an increase of 1,200 rials to their retirement pay.

6. The following posts are exempted from the transportation allowance:

a. Ministers, their deputies, and ministry under secretaries.

b. Governors and government deputy governors.

c. District commissioners.

d. Chairmen and directors of public establishments, authorities, and companies.

Prime Minister Confers With UNDP Official

JN151214092 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 15 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister brother Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas this morning received brother Dr. 'Ali 'Atiqah, assistant secretary general and regional director of the Arab office of the UN Development Program [UNDP].

During their meeting, the officials reviewed cooperation between our country and the UNDP, as well as developing this cooperation in several areas.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Faraj Ghanim, planning and development minister; 'Abd-al-Wali al-'Ans, the ministry under secretary for technical cooperation; as well as brother 'Awni al-'Ans, the UN representative in Sanaa.

Saddam Addresses Arab, Foreign Women

JN1512145492 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1420 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Baghdad, 15 Dec (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has said that Baghdad will remain as it has always been since it was built: A minaret for the Arab nation, all believers, and humanity; and a supporter of Palestine until it is liberated, God willing, and a supporter of the peoples who need support, wherever these people may be and regardless of their nationality.

The president's statements were made today when he received a number of foreign, Arab, and Iraqi women attending the 14th congress of the General Union of Iraqi Women.

On this occasion, a ceremony was held during which President Saddam Husayn bestowed the Medal of High Merit on a number of honorable Arab and foreign women who took part in the peace trip on board the ship Ibn-Khaldun before the evil aggression against Iraq.

Also during the ceremony, President Saddam Husayn was given a oath by the Iraqi women in accordance with a decision adopted by the 14th congress of the General Union of Iraqi Women.

The president made a speech at the ceremony in which he said:

Thank God that sisters from around the world came to Baghdad, representing their countries and all of humanity. Before the military aggression against Iraq, these women had met aboard the ship Ibn-Khaldun to send the message that they were doing their duty to prevent it. Thus we see that while there are aggressors against humanity, there are those who stand up for humanity.

His excellency added: This gathering does not have under its command fleets like those owned by the United States or other imperialism powers. Neither does your gathering have armies. As representatives of humanity, it is atypical of you to attempt to bribe your way to anything.

His excellency continued: Admittedly, not a great many women have come here, but their presence in itself is significant. Only believers among them have come.

May the ladies who have come from friendly foreign nations live long.

May the faithful, Muslim ladies among you live long.

And may Arab and Iraqi ladies among you live long.

I am not surprised by the remark made by the ladies from Egypt, Belgium, and Greece that they had expected to see devastation all around the place where they decided to visit Iraq, but, as a matter of fact, they have seen nothing of the kind.

President Saddam Husayn said: An overall destruction occurred during the aggression. The aggressors destroyed everything their sinful hands could reach; that is, every material edifice and every corner their planes could reach. They also attacked children, women, the elderly, and men.

His excellency asserted that the thing they could not strike was the faith in the people's minds, hearts, and consciences. Because of their deep faith and the vitality of their goals, he said, faithful people have been able to reconstruct what was destroyed by the evildoers. They even added new structures, which did not exist before the aggression. This all happened within only 20 months.

He also said: The aggressors even attacked the highway linking the Jordanian-Iraqi border with Baghdad, as well as its bridges. Nevertheless, everything has been rebuilt and faith remains in our hearts. God be praised.

His excellency affirmed that among the matters of which we, in Baghdad, are proud is that Baghdad not only represents its immediate environment or its Arab nation, but also all of humanity through the goals and slogans of the Mother of Battles to which we adhere and which we will not abandon, with the help of God. The will, which believes in these goals and for which it endured much as a result of aggression, will achieve victory. We will continue to strongly chant:

Long live the faithful wherever they may be.

Long live the Arab nation as one nation.

Long live Palestine as free and Arab.

Long live Palestine.

Long live humanity.

We thank the sisters who expressed their appreciation for the Iraqi people, both in the speeches they delivered or in any way through which the glorious women expressed their feelings and stands. We thank them for being with us and we understand the meaning of coming to Baghdad at this time. People who come here have to undergo the hardship of traveling more than 1,000 km from Amman to Baghdad, and then have to travel the same distance back to Amman. We also understand the other problems which you would face as a result of coming to Baghdad. However, what we want to affirm is that, with God's help, Baghdad will remain as it has always been since it was built: A minaret for the Arab nation, all believers, and humanity.

President Saddam Husayn stressed that Baghdad will always be a supporter of Palestine until it is liberated, God willing, and a supporter of the people who need support, wherever these people may be and regardless of their nationality.

The ceremony was attended by Hazim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, chief of the Presidential Office, and Mrs. Manal Yunus, president of the General Union of Iraqi Women.

Paper Says Saddam Leaking Report on Resignation

NC1512215992 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] An opposition group has said that tyrant Saddam Husayn is trying to break his regime's isolation by leaking information about his possible resignation from all official duties. The newspaper AL-RAFIDAYN, the mouthpiece of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, has reported that a number of senior officials in the ostracized regime's Foreign Ministry have said that the dictator may announce his resignation as head of the regime as well as commander of the Armed Forces and maintain duties [words indistinct] (?outside) power.

The newspaper notes that by leaking this information, tyrant Husayn seeks to run the regime from behind the scenes and then to return to power again once his objectives have been achieved.

It should be recalled that following his defeat in the Gulf war, dictator Saddam Husayn leaked similar information in an attempt to ease the international pressure on his regime.

Regime Said Preparing for Attacks in South

NC1512172192 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1440 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Our sources have monitored large-scale movements by dictatory Saddam's troops throughout the south, particularly in the southern marshes. The sources have noted that three brigades, two Republican Guards brigades and another brigade, have moved from Baghdad and entered al-'Amarah Governorate to beef up the regime's troops, which have been besieging the marshlands for more than a year and a half.

The sources have said that in the past few days a number of brigades had begun exercises with live ammunition in al-Tib region that are scheduled to last for 15 days. They include the 27th Mechanized Infantry Brigade of the 1st Division. The sources have added that according to preliminary information, the regime is getting ready to execute intensive attacks against the southern marshes in al-Basrah, al-'Amarah, and al-Nasiriyah.

Al-Madinah Party Branch Reportedly Bombed

NC1312143392 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1330 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] For the second time in a short period, the Islamic revolution mujahidin planted a time bomb in the 'Aflaqite party branch in al-Madinah district at 1200 on 4 December 1992. The strong explosion, which was heard 12 km away, destroyed the remainder of the diabolic den and caused panic among the tyrant's hired henchmen.

The 'Aflaqite presence receded in the al-Madinah district, where our mujahidin controlled the area for an hour.

Kurdistan Parliament Speaker on West's Forces

PM1612102492 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 12 Dec 92 p7

[Zuhayr Qusaybati report: "Iraqi Kurdistan Parliament Speaker Tells AL-HAYAH: No Alternative to Return of Western Forces If They Withdraw From Turkish Territory"]

[Text] London—Jawhar Namiq Salim, speaker of the parliament of "the Iraqi Kurdistan region," has emphasized to AL-HAYAH that "there would be no alternative to the return of Western forces to northern Iraq if Turkey does not renew the mandate for these forces to remain in its territory" to protect Iraqi Kurds.

Muhammad Bahr al-'Ulum, member of the tripartite leadership from the opposition's "Unified Iraqi National Congress," told AL-HAYAH that Iran's proposal calling for the formation of a regional force as an alternative to the Western forces "would not solve the problem of the Kurds." He ruled out any possibility of expanding the tripartite leadership to overcome the reservations of the "Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution" in Iraq. He stressed that this "is a leadership for the opposition not for Iraq, taking into consideration the geographical divisions so as to include the north, the center, and the south," not sectarian representation.

The parliament speaker and the member of the tripartite leadership were speaking yesterday after the former addressed a meeting at the branch of the National Congress Executive Committee in London on "the democratic experiment of the Kurdish parliament" in northern Iraq and the tour the parliamentary delegation was making of European and Scandinavian capitals.

The delegation arrived in the British capital last Sunday at the invitation of the foreign office. It had visited Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Austria at the invitation of their parliaments. It will go to France next. The delegation, which is headed by Jawhar Namiq Salim and includes Sa'di Ahmad Barah (from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan), Dr. Rahmah Najm Jaf (member of parliament representing the Kurdish Democratic Party list), and Francis Yusuf Shabu (from the Assyrian Movement), has met with representatives of British Conservative and Labour members of parliament. Yesterday it met with British Overseas Development Minister Lynda Chalker.

Speaking in the presence of the Kurdish delegation members, Bahr al-'Ulum said "we, the Islamists, want democracy. We are fed up with wars and coups in Iraq." He added that "Saddam must be brought down by armed struggle or political action." He saw the federalism adopted by the Kurdish parliament as a "regulation of the autonomy. We do not oppose it in principle," but he added that the Iraqi Kurds "have not explained what kind of federalism" they want.

Jawhar Naming Salim emphasized that the UN renewal of the memorandum of understanding with Baghdad "has restored some status to the regime" in Iraq.

AL-HAYAH asked him about Iran's proposal calling for the formation of a regional force to protect the Iraqi Kurds. He replied that "interference by such a force would complicate the issue. It is not in the Kurdish people's interest to involve the states of the region." He thought it unlikely that Turkey would, at the end of this month, refuse to renew the mandate for the U.S., British, and French forces to remain on its territory to protect the Iraqi Kurds "and if it did, these forces could deploy in some other countries, and if there is no other alternative, we would not object to the return of these Western forces to northern Iraq to be stationed in Zakho or Dahuk for example."

Asked about the Iranian-Turkish-Syrian plan to hold a second meeting in Damascus in February at foreign ministerial level to discuss the situation in northern Iraq, bearing in mind that they have refused to recognize the "fait accompli" and the Kurdish administration, he replied "we did not impose a fait accompli. The Kurdish people have a right to exercise self-determination." He added that a Kurdish delegation headed by Dr. Kamal Fu'ad "is now in Damascus to explain our position. Another Kurdish delegation headed by Mashrawan Barzani is in Tehran for the same purpose."

On the chances of a resumption of negotiations between the Kurds and the Iraqi regime, he said "we would not hesitate to solve the Kurdish problem with any regime that accepts parliamentary plurality and recognizes the Kurdish people's rights." He said that the Kurdish parliamentary delegation urged the capitals it visited to seek exclusion of Iraqi Kurdistan from the international blockade imposed on Iraq since its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Turkoman Opposition Fadil Dimirji Interviewed

PM141213092 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 9-15 Dec 92 pp 46-47

[Interview with Dr. Fadil Dimirji, "an Iraqi Turkoman opposition," by Najm 'Abd-al-Karim; place, date not given]

[Excerpts] ['Abd-al-Karim] What do the Turkomans want?

[Dimirji] We want to live in a unified Iraqi homeland that does not discriminate between Arabs and Turkomans in the spheres of education, army, and employment, and which allows us to practice our Turkoman heritage represented in our folklore, in addition to using our mother tongue. And I believe this is a legitimate right for every people and every nationality.

['Abd-al-Karim] Do the Turkomans want to live in a specific area of Iraq, or are they spread throughout it?

[Dimirji] We are spread and distributed, but geographical distribution is important to us, as we live in provinces. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Karim] What is the Turkoman population?

[Dimirji] Over 2 million.

['Abd-al-Karim] And the Kurds?

[Dimirji] Three million.

['Abd-al-Karim] But Mas'ud Barzani said that the Kurdish population is over 4 million.

[Dimirji] I am a statistician, teach statistics, and know more than Barzani about this matter. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Karim] You say that the Turkomans represent 90 percent of Khakurk's population, whereas Mustafa Barzani said that Khakurk was the Kurds' capital. So how can Khakurk be the Kurds' capital, when the Turkomans represent the great majority, as you say?

[Dimirji] He says that Khakurk is the Kurds' capital, but there are no Kurds in Khakurk now. The Kurds have left Khakurk. The best evidence is the 1957 statistics. I read Mas'ud Barzani's statement to AL-MAJALLAH in which he said that 95 percent of Karkuk's population are non-Arabs—which is true, and non-Arabs means Turkomans. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Karim] Are there Iraqi oppositionists among the Turkomans?

[Dimirji] The Turkomans have their own organizations which are opposed to the present Iraqi regime. They also have their activities among Iraqi opposition factions, and they participated in the uprising and occupied several areas, except Khakurk, into which the Kurds moved.

['Abd-al-Karim] If the Turkomans have their own organizations, why have they not managed to work with the other opposition factions?

[Dimirji] Because opposition factions are divided into 30 pieces. The Kurds have 13 parties, whereas the Turkomans have just three or four organizations. And we maintain cautious coordination with the Iraqi factions abroad. But inside Iraq, and when the uprising erupted, the Turkomans played a major role.

['Abd-al-Karim] The Turkomans wish to live in peace under a unified Iraqi state while insisting to preserve your heritage and language. Do you not think about self-rule or federal rule?

[Dimirji] We have no such orientation. However, before the Kurds think about self-rule and federal rule they should sit down with us to negotiate over the area they want to control. This is because we represent 30 percent of the population in the region. So how can there be Kurdish self-rule or federal rule when 30 percent of the region's population are Turkomans?" [passage omitted]

[Abd-al-Karim] Do you believe that Iraq's fragmentation into petty states and autonomous regions for the Kurds or in the south or center is in the Turkomans' interest?

[Dizayi] That is not in the Turkomans' interests. And although I am a Turkoman, I am an advocate of Arab unity. But while others are seeking partition, I am demanding my right, even though I am still at the stage of talking, constructive dialogue, and civilized discussion. Whereas the Kurds have for years been shedding blood.

[Abd-al-Karim] Do you receive aid from Turkey, on the grounds that you are Turkomans?

[Dizayi] The only thing we are proud of is that we do not rely on any state, be it Turkey, some Arab states, or other states. We are free, struggling to obtain our right legitimately and honorably, because the Turkoman areas are our right and the Kurds want to annex them to the Kurdish areas. And regrettably there are those who say that north Iraq is Kurdish.

[Abd-al-Karim] Barzani said that they are not thinking about separating from the central state.

[Dizayi] I doubt that claim, because their elections reached al-Sulaymaniyah, which is not below parallel 36. This parallel is above al-Sulaymaniyah in just four areas, namely Dukuk, 'Aqrah, Shaqlawah, and Zakhu. And parallel 36 includes a small inhabited area, [sentence as published] And the Kurds met in the al-Sulaymaniyah area to prepare for their elections. And they have television stations there which transmit in the Kurdish language.

Progress on 'Mother of Battles River' Reported

JN1312165692 Baghdad INA in English 1350 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 13, INA—Technicians of the Military Industry Commission are now engaged in digging Umm al-Ma'arik (Mother of Battles) river, a giant irrigation project to be implemented in southern Iraq.

The 120-km-long project which has been divided into ten work sites extends from Dhi Qar to al-Basrah Provinces, member of the river execution committee, Engineer Qays 'Ali Ghalib was quoted by AL-JUMHURIYAH daily as saying.

A number of firms are taking part in the construction drive including al-Mathanna Company, the Iraqi Contracting Company for Land Reclamation, al-Nahrawan Company, al-Hadba Company for Irrigation Projects, al-Anfal Contracting Company, Ashur Contracting Company, al-Fao department.

According to Engineer Ghalib, al-Furat Center of Studies and Designs for Irrigation Projects is now preparing the design of the regulator which is to be constructed in the area where Umm al-Ma'arik river meets the Euphrates. The regulator helps control the quantity of water flowing into the river.

He added that technicians will dig five irrigation canals at a total length of 70 kilometers.

Digging work is estimated at one and a half times more than that on Saddam River, according to AL-JUMHURIYAH daily.

Director of roads and bridges department, Engineer Nabil 'Abd-al- Qadir said some five vehicle bridges and two for trains are to be constructed.

Further on Reaction to Killing of Policeman

Victim Died of Stab Wound

TA1512152292 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] An initial check of the body of Staff Sergeant Major Nissim Toledano has ended, indicating that he was stabbed to death in his neck. The pathologist estimates that the murder was committed last night. Blood stains were discovered at the site where the body was found. Toledano's pistol was removed. His body was transferred to the Abu-Kabir forensic institute. This is reported by our correspondents Moshe Nussbaum and Miri Amir.

Police Beefing Up Forces

TA1512183092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] The police are stepping up their presence throughout Israel tonight, placing an emphasis on several sensitive areas so as to prevent disturbances and acts of violence. Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports this was decided this evening at the end of a special debate held by senior police commanders with the participation of Police Minister Moshe Shahal.

Inspector General Terner has instructed all police district commanders to adopt a firm hand against any element that uses the public's pain for excitement, ferment, or disorder. Minister Shahal expressed confidence that the perpetrators of the murder will be caught, stressing that the Israeli people should demonstrate maturity in this trying period. At the moment, the minister and inspector general are making their way to the home of Staff Sergeant Major Toledano, to extend their condolences to his family.

Rabin Addresses Knesset

TA1512163392 Jerusalem Channel Two Television Network in Hebrew 1412 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Address by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to Knesset plenum in Jerusalem, following discovery of border policeman's body—live]

[Excerpt] Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset:

The struggle for our lives here, and the continuous battle over our desire to take root in this country and live like all other people has today extracted another sacrifice from us. Border Police Staff Sergeant Major Nissim Toledano was murdered by despicable people, by the bloodthirsty animals from the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] organization. His body was discovered this morning on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho after he was kidnapped two days ago on his way to work at the Border Police base in Lod. The Israeli Government declared its readiness to establish contact and hold a dialogue with his kidnappers. The murder proves the justness of our demand to receive proof that the kidnapped man was still alive as a precondition for dialogue. The murder proves that these were despicable murderers that had no real intention to negotiate. Staff Sergeant Major Toledano was murdered despite Israel's expressed readiness to negotiate with his abductors. In your name, and in the name of all Israeli citizens, we send our condolences to the Toledano family, whose dignified bearing while experiencing such terrible pain and anxiety is worthy of all respect, admiration, and appreciation. Today, our hearts are with the bereaved family, which has lost one dear to them and to all of us.

Distinguished Knesset, the sharp anguish we feel over Nissim Toledano's death will not prevent us from pursuing the path we have chosen to take. We are building a nation, state, and home here. We are granting refuge to Jews who are persecuted merely on account of their religion. Our heart bleeds today, but this is what I have to say to those who rise up against us: We may be hurt, we may have to pay a price; however, we will bite our lips, go on, and eventually prove victorious. Terror has no chance against us. Nothing will make us budge from here: neither cranes, nor firebombs nor knives; neither Hamas, nor the Popular Front, nor Fatah; neither Ahmad Yasin, nor Ahmad Jibril, nor Yasir 'Arafat. We are here, and this is where we shall live forever.

Knesset members, we have but one path and it splits into two tracks: On the one hand, we must continue striving for peace, but at the same time we must wage a ruthless war against terrorism. Despite the pain we feel today, we continue to pursue the making of peace. We have no intention of halting the peace talks currently taking place in Washington. We intend to attain peace. We continue to believe that a political solution will provide peace for both us and for those who surround us. We are also aware and convinced that today's murder, like every other recent act of terror, has two intentions: to kill Jews and Israelis, and to kill peace—to prevent the continuation of the peace negotiations, to quash any readiness, seal any crack, and lock every door to the peace that is attainable. While striving toward peace, we have no intention of abandoning the war against terror. We will continue to combat terror as though there were no peace negotiations.

Last night, the security forces arrested over 1,200 suspected Hamas activists, including its leadership in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. We intend to continue doing everything within the framework of the law to mercilessly strike at the organization, its members, and supporters. We shall not relax for even one instant our unflagging efforts to capture the killers of Staff Sergeant Major Toledano or the other killers and terrorists. The instructions issued to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the other security forces are clear and unequivocal. They are to strike at the terrorists, and at the murderers and at those who send them to carry out their acts.

This is a difficult hour, and we are experiencing painful moments. We, the Israeli public, each and every one of us, bears the responsibility to bite our lip and continue. We must show restraint and bear the pain, and not allow ourselves to surrender to panic and violence, to disturbances and chaos inside Israel. This is what our enemies want and it is our duty to prevent this.

Knesset members, an unbroken line of blood, a pact of pain links Nissim Toledano and Refa'el Ben-Haroush [one of the Moroccan Jews drowned on the ship "Egoz" on its way to Israel in 1965], may they rest in peace. This blood pact stretches from the city of Saic in Morocco, the homeland of the Ben-Haroush family, to Lod, where the Toledano family is mourning the loss of its father. Nissim Toledano and Refa'el Ben-Haroush, both sons to wonderful families, both descendants of the magnificent Jewish community in Morocco, did not know each other. They meet today here in the unending saga of Jewish and Israeli redemption. Refa'el Ben-Haroush was lost at sea, and paid with his life for his desire to become an Israeli. Nissim Toledano paid with his life because he was an Israeli. [passage omitted]

Spokesman on Anti-Hamas Measures

TA1512190792 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Interview with Gad Ben-Ari, the prime minister's media adviser, by David Ze'ev, following Rabin's Knesset address on 15 December; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Ze'ev] I asked Prime Minister Rabin's media adviser, Gad Ben-Ari, whether the tough steps the prime minister pledged in his [Knesset] address include taking action against the over 1,200 Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists that were taken into Israeli custody last night.

[Ben-Ari] I don't wish at this point to say what is going to happen. We are going to use any possible means within the limits of the law in the war against terror. What happened last night is only one measure out of various measures, as I said before, which will be taken by the security forces in order to make sure that if terror cannot be abolished, at least that we will minimize the effects of the terror. One thing I can say at this point, that is, that in spite of all that and maybe because we know that the intent and the purpose of such brutal murders is to try to jeopardize the peace negotiations, we are, the government is determined to continue the negotiations, continue with the efforts to pursue the peace process on the one hand, but that would not deter us for a second to continue an ongoing war against the terrorists.

[Ze'ev] The preliminary findings of the pathologist's report say that the border policeman was killed last night, not during the first hours after he was abducted. Is the prime minister feeling right now that he did all he could have to talk to the Hamas, to do whatever was necessary?

[Ben-Ari] Well, I think, you know, he spoke yesterday on television and everybody could watch and could listen to his words. He did not use the word negotiations, but he used the word hidabrut [Hebrew for a dialogue], mainly a contact with the captors will take place. I think that that was a clear signal that we will all be willing to talk to them if we are assured and if we are convinced that Nissim Toledano is alive. I am sure that was a very clear signal to them. They apparently never intended to keep him alive. We suspected that, but we hoped that there is a chance, that he may be alive. Unfortunately we were proved to be wrong.

Rabin Warns of Security Measures

TA1512212892 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has called on the world not to be surprised if Israel now adopts very severe measures for its security and in order to guarantee the continuation of the peace negotiations. According to the prime minister, a rise has been marked in recent months in the activity of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad, which are supported by Saudi Arabia and Iran. Our correspondent Nava Kohen reports that at the annual conference of building contractors in Jerusalem's Binyeney Ha'uma convention hall, Mr. Rabin emphasized that one should distinguish between terror and negotiations; we should continue to make peace while waging an uncompromising war against the terror organizations.

'Emergency Steps' Detailed

TA1612120992 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Excerpt] The cabinet was briefed today by the prime minister about the emergency steps taken to fight terrorism. The prime minister ordered that the report of the findings of the autopsy on the body of Staff Sergeant Major Nissim Toledano be made public when it is completed. Our political correspondent Natan Guttman reports on the special cabinet meeting from Jerusalem:

Good day from the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem. The special cabinet meeting today was scheduled for Sunday, but then the main issue on the agenda was the crisis at Israel Military Industries. A special, lengthy discussion was held today about the intensification of terrorism and the steps that should and could be taken against the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terror. The cabinet sat as the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs, so not much can be said about its deliberations. Following is the government announcement summing up the discussion:

In its capacity as the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs, the cabinet was briefed today by Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister, about the emergency steps that the government and the defense establishment are taking to fight terrorism.

Prime Minister Rabin ordered that the full report on the results of the autopsy on the body of Sgt. Maj. Toledano be published when it is completed. The prime minister reported that, in the framework of the steps taken, some 1,200 Hamas activists have been detained so far.

At the end of the discussion, the ministers were determined that steps have to be taken. They all said that it is hard to discuss the steps at present but they will be felt in a few days. Here is what Ministers Shetrit and Ben-Eli'ezer had to say after the session regarding the steps that can and should be taken against Hamas:

[Begin recording] [Shetrit] Israel's Government must take steps. Resolutions on the steps will be made in due time.

[Gutman] Are there things to do against the Hamas terror?

[Shetrit] There are means that have been used in the past, and the list is known. Things like demolition of the houses of people who were found responsible for terror acts and the deportation of people who are responsible for incitement or other activities. These matters will be examined and a decision will be made.

[Gutman] Minister Ben-Eli'ezer, should the government again resort to deportations and administrative detentions?

[Ben-Eli'ezer] The cabinet today discussed the situation as it is. It discussed a very long list of steps. When they are taken, the public will be made aware of them. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Egyptian Ambassador Condemns Murder

TA1512171192 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Eldad Beck]

[Text] Muhammad Basyuni, Egypt's ambassador in Israel, has reacted to the border policeman's murder, making remarks similar to those of Dr. Hayder 'Abd-al-Shafi. Basyuni termed Toledano's murder a regrettable act, which Egypt condemns.

[Basyuni's remarks in Arabic, followed by Beck's translation and addition] There is no doubt, Basyuni says, that the Washington talks have registered some progress, and therefore, we must not allow the radicals and enemies of peace to achieve their goals. The talks must continue so that peace is attained. A struggle against terror is not enough, according to the Egyptian ambassador; the reasons for violence should be uprooted through a just peace solution.

Palestinians React to Murder

TA1512193092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Palestinian figures in the territories who are identified with the PLO's moderate wing expressed displeasure at the murder of an Israeli border policeman, but refrained from explicitly condemning the deed. As'ad al-Saftawi from Gaza said that the murder runs contrary to the spirit of Islam. Radwan Abu-Ayyash estimated that the act would have an adverse effect on the peace process. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports.

[Begin recording] [Amir] When the news of Staff Sergeant Major Nissim Toledano's murder reached the territories, local residents expressed fear of reprisals by settlers and Israeli citizens in retaliation for the despicable crime. Many considered the murder of Toledano to be tantamount to killing a POW, and said that Islam forbids such an action because Islam rules that a prisoner's life is merely temporarily entrusted to his captors. Gaza notable As'ad al-Saftawi said that the policeman's abduction had boosted the prestige of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]; however, murdering him had caused the organization serious damage. Radwan Abu-Ayyash from Ramallah assessed that Toledano's murder would have an adverse effect on the peace process.

[Abu-Ayyash, in English] Such incidents, violent incidents, whether it is on the Israeli side, whether it is on the Palestinian side, I don't think it will help the peace process. It might affect it negatively, it might also lead to more frustration among the people. For this reason I have been calling on both sides to do something quickly in Washington and to score some progress on the talks. [end recording]

Islamic Leader Condemns Murder

TA1512192192 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Telephone interview with 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, head of the Islamic Movement in Israel, by Guy Zohar and Gosi Mardor—live]

[Text] [Zohar] 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, leader of the Islamic Movement in Israel, good day to you. Do you condemn the murder of Staff Sergeant Major Nissim Toledano?

[Darwish] Indeed. This is a very, very... [changes thought] Regrettably, only yesterday I had said that I did not want to hear news of the soldier's death. This exhibits the atmosphere in the entire region. Therefore, not only do I denounce the murder, but I also am hopeful that such acts will not occur in our entire region.

[Mardor] Do you think that everything was done to try and prevent this murder?

[Darwish] I think that the reaction should have come from the Israeli Government. Everything that public figures could have done—they appealed through the Israeli media; I made a double appeal: even the jailed shaykh, Ahmad Yasin, made an appeal on Israel Television's Arabic program—they....

[Zohar, interrupting] What could the government have done in the absence of a sign of life from the abducted policeman?

[Darwish] When I heard that the soldier was murdered I asked why we should have all these acts. The Israeli side should have issued a statement that it was prepared to negotiate with the kidnappers and hear their reactions....

[Zohar, interrupting] But one should receive a sign of life first.

[Darwish] Yes, you are right about that. In my opinion, none of us knew whether he was alive or not. Still, we should have heard such an announcement, or alternatively, heard that all Israeli elements were doing everything they could to open negotiations or a dialogue. His death is the best sign, of course.

For my part, I regret that such acts continue in our region, on both sides of the Green Line. Israelis get killed on the Israeli side, and Palestinians get killed on the Palestinian side, and I do not know where this chain will lead us. Staff Sergeant Major Tobaltsev was murdered, but I hope that we do not all murder the peace process....

[Mardor, interrupting] Do you think that there was a short circuit between the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leadership and its men in the west? You spoke earlier about appeals by Shaykh Yasin and yourself against his murder, but he was still murdered.

[Darwish] I think that the Islamic leadership in the occupied territories should draw the appropriate conclusions as to why this happened despite Hamas leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin's appeal, his emotional appeal....

[Zohar, interrupting] Is there no control over Hamas people in the area today?

[Darwish] I do not know. It is the leadership that should draw the conclusions. In my opinion, whoever does not control his people should get up and go, resign. One either should control his people, children, and followers, or get up and leave. I do not know whether they are in control or not. What is clear to us is that Shaykh Ahmad Yasin directly called on the kidnappers to save the soldier's life. The Islamic Movement in Israel, I, Likud Knesset Member As'ad As'ad, a Druze, and Meretz members—we all issued an appeal, but if the kidnappers did not heed Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, could they have heeded us? In my opinion, the leaders should draw conclusions as to whether they are in control or not.

[Zohar] 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, thank you.

More Reaction to Murder

TA1512203692

[Editorial Report] A report on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1800 GMT on 15 December cites additional reaction to the murder of Border Policeman Nissim Toledano. The report states that "Moledet leader Rehav'am Ze'evi said terrorists should get the death penalty and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists expelled, instead of keeping them on pension in prison. His Moledet colleague, Rabbi Yosef Ba-Gad said Shaykh Ahmad Yasin should face capital charges of murder."

"HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] MK [Knesset Member] Hashim Mahamid said his party condemned the murder as an act that would not serve the interests of the Palestinians or of peace. In his view, there is no choice but to continue with the political negotiations."

"Opposition Tsomet MK Gonen Segev says the government should stop the peace talks in Washington and deport every member of Hamas apprehended by the Israel security forces."

Also citing reactions to the border policeman's murder, Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 15 December adds that "the Peace Now Movement calls on the government and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to adopt every measure necessary to wipe out the Hamas terror. At the same time, the movement calls on the government to increase its efforts to break the deadlock in the peace talks with the Palestinians, since an agreement on autonomy is a decisive answer to all those who want to drive peace away.

"The Committee of Arab Local Councils and the Bedouin youth association also condemn the murder and express their sympathy for the murdered policeman's family. They hope that the peace negotiations will continue, and call on the population, to show restraint."

Also, "MK Ari'el Sharon has called for the establishment of an emergency national unity government, with Labor and the Likud at its center, for a definite and limited period of time, in order to concentrate the antiterror effort. Our party affairs correspondent Hanan 'Azran reports that the Likud claims the proposal was made by Ari'el Sharon only, as this idea had not been discussed at the party institutions at all. It was reported from the Prime Minister's Office that there is no intention to react to these remarks now."

Hamas Leader on Soldier's Murder

TA1512222992 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari on Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, and the detention of Hamas activists, including a recorded interview, in English, with "one of the leaders of Hamas in

Jordan," identified on the screen as Muhammad Nazzal, by an unidentified correspondent; place, date not specified]

[Excerpts] Until the pathologist has his say, if there is a precise opinion about the hour of murder at all, the following assumption is valid: Nisim Toledano's kidnappers were not at all serious about holding negotiations over his release. Rather, from the very beginning they tried to cover the murder with the halo of a terrorist act for bargaining purposes, with the approach that this might possibly also earn them the release, be it only for an hour, of Shaykh Yasin. Naturally, the Hamas leadership in the diaspora continues to shed a different light on this.

[Begin recording] [Nazzal] They have arrested at least 1,000 of our members and supporters inside territories, so I think they are responsible for the death of the soldier.

[Correspondent] But the prime minister, Yitzhaq Rabin, said that he is willing to negotiate. Why did you kill the soldier?

[Nazzal] Actually it was a tactic, and he was not serious, and we told him through our representatives, Dr. al-Zahhar and Dr. al-Rantisi that we are ready, Hamas is ready to release the soldier, but they have one condition, the condition to release Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, but he was not released.

[Correspondent] So you killed the soldier.

[Nazzal] They killed the soldier, I mean the group, but....[sentence as heard]

[Correspondent] Kidnapping Israeli soldiers—is it a new tactic? Are you planning to repeat it again and again?

[Nazzal] Firstly, we don't think that it is kidnapping. It's capture, because we are in the state of war, and we are struggling to expel our enemy from our land. This is our land. So, about this operation, it is a humanitarian operation, but about military operations—we think that we have a right to continue our military operations against the authorities.

[Correspondent] Including kidnapping more soldiers?

[Nazzal] I can't limit the means, but I can say about our policy, Hamas policy: Hamas policy to increase the military operations against the authorities. [end recording]

The detention of the 1,200 Hamas activists on various levels in fact means uprooting the level responsible for advocating Hamas policies and enlisting members, but not necessarily the level responsible for violence. The question is how long they will be held and whether deportations will take place. One may assume that some of the detainees will be placed under administrative detention while others will be released after a week or two of interrogation. [passage omitted]

Fatah activists in the area say the problem is not the detentions but the fact that both Saudi Arabia and Iran stopped funneling funds to the Hamas, the Iranian aid amounting to about $30 million.

In short, Hamas is an armed, deep-running underground, as well as a semi-open organization. The problem is that of delving into the depths of the armed underground rather than fully exposing its overt elements. Hamas activists in the area believe that the recent act has increased support for them, while Fatah people hope this is merely a temporary phenomenon. [passage omitted]

It should be remembered that following the deportation of Hamas activists from Gaza, Hamas has consolidated itself, and rather than being an organization, it is a movement, across the border, with branches in Iran, Lebanon, Jordan, and elsewhere, under the auspices of the local Muslim Brotherhood branches, and even enjoying the support of Muslim elements in the United States and Britain. These accept the claim by Dr. al-Rantisi tonight, prior to his detention, that the kidnap of an armed soldier is not an act of terror. [passage omitted]

Rabin Opposes U.S. Submitting Autonomy Proposal

TA1612115692 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 16 Dec 92 p A11

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has sent the new U.S. Administration a message explaining his opposition to the United States' adopting a position on matters of substance being discussed between Israel and the Arabs. An announcement by the prime minister's bureau noted that the remarks were made in a conversation with House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt, who brought him greetings from President-elect Bill Clinton and informed him that Clinton expects to meet with him during a visit to the United States (in late March).

Rabin's remarks refer to the suggestion by State Department officials that the United States present Israel and the Palestinians with an autonomy proposal aimed at bridging the gap between them. Senior Foreign Ministry sources in Jerusalem confirmed that in the meeting with Elyaqim Rubinstein Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian called for Israel to agree to the United States' presenting its autonomy proposal. Despite the denial by members of the Israeli delegation in Washington, the sources reiterated that the proposal was raised and that Rubinstein rejected it outright.

Gephardt said in the talk with Rabin that Clinton will be an active partner to the peace process and that in addition to dealing with internal matters he also will devote time to foreign issues. The meeting also was attended by Representative Dan Glickman. Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin told the two guests that their country also has an important role to play in the era of

direct talks, especially in the Syrian track. He expressed the hope that Washington will assist in creating an atmosphere that will convince the Palestinians to make a courageous decision.

Beilin said the aim of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is to exert pressure on Israel and the Palestinians interested in negotiations. He said that there might be a worsening in the security situation parallel to progress in the negotiations and that Israel must act together with the Palestinians to make sure that the outcome of that pressure is contrary to what Hamas wants, in other words, that there is quicker progress in the negotiations. [passage omitted]

A report that arrived from Washington about Monday's meeting with the Syrian delegation said that Israel rejected a Syrian proposal for a joint document the wording of which on a Golan Heights withdrawal permits Israel to claim that from its viewpoint the document does not constitute recognition of the demand for a total withdrawal.

The Syrians stressed that they differentiate between peace and normalization and from the wording it appears that they are ready to reach a peace settlement, but without normalization. Sources in Jerusalem said that it leaves an opening for a settlement in stages: In the first stage, peace in exchange for a partial withdrawal, and in the second, normalization and diplomatic ties in exchange for a full withdrawal.

Beilin said yesterday that a cautious study of President al-Asad's speech on Monday indicates that he is no longer attacking Israel along the old lines and now is talking about making peace, but not about "moves toward peace"—a definition he adopted during the negotiations on the interim arrangement in the mid-1970's.

Elyaqim Rubinstein and Ambassador Zalman Shoval yesterday appealed to the State Department to find out whether there is an intention to invite Faysal al-Husayni to a meeting with President Bush as part of the series of meetings the President will conduct with the negotiating delegations on Thursday. Djerejian neither confirmed nor denied that the three Palestinians who will meet with Bush tomorrow are not necessarily members of the delegation.

[Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew on 16 December publishes on page 4 a report by Hemi Shalev stating that Beilin told DAVAR "that contrary to the picture painted, the political negotiations are not deadlocked. He said: 'Progress is being made in most of the negotiating committees which might even surprise those who thought that nothing would happen in the current round.' Beilin said that in the talks with the Jordanians there are 'very serious discussions,' derived from the understanding in principle reached over the agenda. 'With the Syrians,' he said, 'there is a continuation of a healthy process of mutual exploration—from our viewpoint, of the peace; from their viewpoint, of the withdrawal.' Beilin is reported as saying: 'We must not rule out that both sides will agree on a joint declaration of principles during the current round of negotiations.'" Referring to the talks with the Palestinians, "Beilin said: 'There is a long series of problems,' although 'certain progress' was made toward an understanding on a joint paper."]

Buwayz Returns from France, Comments on Talks

NC1212191092 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz today returned to Beirut from Paris and said that France is closely following the situation in the south and will do everything it can to assist Lebanon with a view to implementing UN Security Council Resolution 425. Buwayz denied knowledge of the possibility that President Rafiq al-Hariri will meet some of the [Lebanese] opposition figures in Paris. Here is a recording of his remarks:

[Begin recording] [Buwayz] France is closely following the developments concerning peace in this region as well as the situation in south Lebanon. France, I have been told, will do everything it can to assist Lebanon with regard to the implementation of UN resolutions, particularly Resolution 425. The French foreign minister may get in touch with his European counterparts to examine European-Lebanese economic cooperation. Saudi-Arab, French-European, and Saudi-French exchanges may take place in this context.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri's visit to Paris is to discuss French support for Resolution 425 and seek more assistance. Do you know anything about the outcome of al-Hariri's talks in Paris?

[Buwayz] As far as I know, al-Hariri's visit to Paris is a private one. Of course, this does not preclude the possibility of holding sideline consultations. So far, the visit is a private one and I am not aware of any consultations.

[Correspondent] Has anything been decided concerning European assistance?

[Buwayz] There are consultations under way between some officials of the Lebanese Defense and Finance Ministries and the French authorities. I believe that these consultations made some progress in terms of rescheduling old loans and obtaining new ones.

[Correspondent] In your interview yesterday with AL-HAYAH newspaper, you said that you met French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and discussed with him the situation in the Lebanese south and the means of bringing it under control. What exactly are your views concerning the means of bringing the situation in the south under control?

[Buwayz] There is nothing new in my position. We have called and we still call on a number of influential countries to intercede and pressure the Israelis so that they will refrain from provocations and restrain their reactions in the south so as to avoid an escalation there.

[Correspondent] There are reports of a possible meeting between al-Hariri and some opposition figures who live in France. How true are these reports?

[Buwayz] I have no knowledge of such matters. Thank you. [end recording]

Buwayz on Paris Talks, Palestinian Issue, Iran

NC1212112092 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, who is visiting France, said his meeting with French counterpart Roland Dumas focused on aid to Lebanon and means of controlling the situation in the south as progress in the peace process is awaited.

In an interview with [London-based] AL-HAYAH newspaper, he noted that peace should be comprehensive, or else there is no peace, and that no one can unilaterally provide cover for bringing about peace. Peace is inseparable whether we like it or not, he said.

Buwayz pointed out that the Palestinian problem has links with most countries because of the Palestinian people's presence in the Arab countries and the problem's ideological and political ramifications. Therefore, he said, no one can take a stand on the issue separate from others.

He noted that Iran's involvement in Lebanese politics so far has forestalled any broad improvement in relations between the two countries. He said: What we aim for are non-sectarian and comprehensive ties according to international diplomatic norms.

Government Not To Take Part in Paris Arms Talks

NC1512190392 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has informed Sayyid Abu-Zayd 'Umar, the Egyptian ambassador to Lebanon, that Lebanon refuses to take part in the meeting to be held in Paris to sign an agreement for reducing chemical weapons. He said that such an agreement must include a commitment by Israel to dismantle its nuclear arsenal. Buwayz has said that the Lebanese Government will welcome such a meeting whenever Israel is ready to end its nuclear program. He proposed authorizing Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd- al-Majid to explain the Arab position on this issue.

Buwayz Comments on Message From Egypt's Musa

NC1512215792 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Egyptian Ambassador to Lebanon Abu-Zayd 'Umar this afternoon said he delivered a written message from Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to Faris Buwayz, his Lebanese counterpart. Ambassador 'Umar said that the message deals with international matters, but he declined to elaborate.

Minister Buwayz, on the other hand, said that the message deals with the Arab position on an agreement that may be signed in Paris concerning the limitation of chemical weapons. Answering a question on the arrests

of members of a certain group [not further identified], Buwayz said: We have reservations about the way these arrests were made.

Jibril Said Satisfied With al-Hariri Government

NC1412192392 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 14 Dec 92

[Text] Labor Minister 'Abdallah al-Amin met today with a Palestinian delegation headed by Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command [PFLP-GC], who expressed his satisfaction with the current government and described it as a national government.

Responding to a question, he said the Palestinians are totally satisfied with this government. We do not believe there is any need to discuss the reactivation of the Lebanese-Palestinian dialogue to organize relations, as was the situation in the past.

Exiled Leaders on al-Hariri, Cabinet, Deputies

PM1412051392 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 11 Dec 92 p 2

[Shukri Nasrallah report: "Lebanese Opposition in Exile Sees al-Hariri's Legitimacy as Popular, Not Parliamentary"]

[Text] Paris—The three opposition leaders in exile—former President Amin al-Jumayyil, [former Army Commander] General Michel 'Awn, and [National Bloc leader] Raymond Iddih, who are living in France—have described "the Lebanese people's demands from Rafiq al-Hariri's government as untimely attempts to turn the crisis into a crisis of mutual interests between the government and the people." [passage as published]

In reply to a question by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT regarding his position on Prime Minister al-Hariri's national reconciliation plans aimed at reuniting the Lebanese people under the "higher national interests slogan," al-Jumayyil said "I do not find myself concerned with such reconciliation. If there is a real serious national reconciliation attempt, then the simplest prerequisite for that would be to allow the opposition leaders and members to return to Lebanon and to work in a peaceful and democratic atmosphere as the rules of democracy dictate. But if the aim is to cool down the opposition, then that would fail."

Al-Jumayyil said that real democracy should be given a chance to return to Lebanon and that the opposition members living abroad should especially be allowed to return. He added that "as long as the opposition remains outside the country's borders, the situation would never be alright." He also said that it was too early to judge that attempt, which is still in the theoretical stage, because of the various new international developments which should be taken into consideration, such as the Arab-Israeli negotiations and the election of a new president in the United States.

In reply to the same question, Gen. Michel 'Awn said: "I personally do not resent" al-Hariri or anyone else, so the proposed reconciliation theory does not apply to me. My quarrel is with those who ousted me by military force.

Gen. 'Awn added: "My demands are not demands I make of the current regime. The regime, therefore, cannot do anything about the crisis. My demands are entrusted to the international community and its institutions, the big powers, and democracy. The international community must restore rights to their owners and legitimacy to those who deserve it."

In reply to another question, 'Awn said: "I know Rafiq al-Hariri and appreciate him and his qualities. I never insulted him or said anything against him, but it should be known that my problem is not with al-Hariri."

Raymond Iddih told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: "I first want to know what national reconciliation means. If it means dealing with the present Chamber of Deputies, then I am against it because the current Chamber of Deputies is both illegal and illegitimate. According to documented information, less than 14 percent of the Lebanese people elected that parliament, which means that the Lebanese people cannot trust their fate to these deputies."

Iddih added: "It would be against the national interest to deal with that Chamber of Deputies because it does not represent the majority. It does not even represent half the Lebanese people plus one. As regards Prime Minister al-Hariri, his case is quite different. I have said openly that al-Hariri's position as prime minister is legal and legitimate because the majority of the Lebanese people see him as a patriotic and capable man. His position as prime minister is, in my view, legitimate because he was appointed by a 100-percent legitimate presidential decree. As such, I can deal with al-Hariri as prime minister but I cannot deal with him as head of the cabinet because the legitimacy of the members of that cabinet is very suspect and because the honesty of some members is suspect and they may not be innocent of some ugly crimes."

Iddih added: My door is open and my hand is extended to Prime Minister al-Hariri. I can listen to whatever he has to say and I can allow myself to be frank with him about the criticism and information that I have. If he talks to me I will tell him that his legitimacy is derived not from the Chamber of Deputies, which is illegitimate, but from his own personal popularity with the public.

Al-Murr on Political Sectarianism, Syrian Ties

NC1212123592 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Excerpts] Deputy Prime Minister Michel al-Murr has said that he supports the abolition of political sectarianism and called for ceasing to portray the issue as a source of apprehension for the Christians.

In an interview with Radio Free Lebanon on the "Responsible Talk" program, he added: If the Chamber of Deputies members were to say that political sectarianism will be abolished after five or 10 years, I definitely would vote in favor of abolishing it. This has nothing to do with myself personally. If it were abolished and someone was asked to run for one of the three main posts, naturally I would nominate myself for one of those posts. Al-Murr expressed the hope that the presidential post will remain with the Maronites in the coming [election] battle so their apprehension will disappear. [passage omitted]

Commenting on the Syrian forces' redeployment and withdrawal from Lebanon, he said it is exclusively a Lebanese-Syrian issue. If the Lebanese Government raises it, the Syrian Government will be responsive, because Syria does not want to stay in Lebanon.

Replying to a question on the Army's readiness to assume its duties, al-Murr noted that the Army has enough personnel, but equipment aid has not yet been received.

He said he is proud of his relations with Syria, and that, as in the past, he still visits Syrian officials. He added that his relations with them have progressed because he has more time than he did before. He emphasized that this relationship is strategic and fundamental and no one can disturb it.

Jumblatt Calls on Displaced People To Return Home

NC1212163392 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Walid Jumblatt, minister of state for refugee affairs, has called on the displaced people of the villages of al-Harf, al- Birah, al-Ma'ash, Kafr Nis, al-Mamyjat, al-Ja'nyil, (al-Ghuwarah), and Wadi al-Sitt to return to their villages and homes beginning today. Addressing a large popular delegation of the displaced people of these villages, Jumblatt said that a meeting will be held in Dayr al-Qamar on Saturday to follow up efforts to improve economic, political, developmental, and educational services in these villages. He said that the financial problem of the return of the displaced people to these areas has been solved through an agreement between the Caridas [charitable organization] and Progressive Socialist Party.

Jumblatt said that his visit to Saudi Arabia was designed to discuss financing the Ministry of Refugee Affairs Fund. He said that the talks were positive and the visit was in agreement with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri. He expressed hope that Saudi Arabia will play a pioneering role in reviving the Arab and international fund. He said that this fund will help the displaced people. On the occasion of Christmas, Jumblatt promised that a solemn Christmas mass will be held in the al-Birah church.

Al-Assad Inaugurates Trade Unions Congress

JN1412165892 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1150 GMT 14 Dec 92

[Speech by President Hafiz al-Assad at the opening session of the 22d congress of the Syrian General Federation of Trade Unions in Damascus—live]

[Text] Brothers and sisters, members of the congress; dear guests: The convening of the 22d Congress of the Syrian General Federation of Trade Unions while our people are celebrating the 22d anniversary of the Corrective Movement is a happy occasion. [applause]

This harmony in reaching a dear stage of development in mankind's life is, without doubt, good luck. It is a sign of the rejuvenating vigor which is a characteristic of the action of the people and their working sectors. It, also, certainly shows the deep and strong cordial relationship between the Corrective Movement and the working class. [applause]

As this coincidence represents a spiritual connection between the people and their producing factions, the policy of the Corrective Movement—since its first days—toward workers and producers was directed by both mind and heart. [applause]

O brother workers, you were, and still are, the basis of economic and social changes. All the accomplishments of the Corrective Movement basically aimed at achieving prosperity, security, and stability for all masses, particularly you. [applause] Your relationship with the Corrective Movement is a relationship between a part and a whole; and the Corrective Movement's relationship with you is a relationship between a whole and a part. Inasmuch as you give, progress will be achieved; and inasmuch as you achieve and inasmuch as we achieve in terms of progress, the working class will develop and people will achieve prosperity. [applause]

I will be proud and happy when I see your federation growing and developing thanks to your alertness, tireless struggle, and continuous efforts. The slogan of your 22d congress came as an expression of the strong relationship between your struggle in your federation and the course of the Corrective Movement. [applause] The convening of this congress under this slogan shows that love of the homeland is a big value and struggle for the sake of its pride and prosperity is a goal that comes above all goals. It is the crowning of vocational, political, and social activities in which you embody your militant values through linking the homeland's higher interests with your social aspirations.

O brothers and sisters, you have realized through your sound discretion that work is sacrifice, that sacrifice is love, and that love is goodness. And the one who bears in his heart love, goodness, and sacrifice will achieve for himself and for the ones around him happiness and delight. [applause]

When you light a new candle in your militant heritage today, you, in fact, are reinforcing your popular participation in the democratic action which has a prominent popular traditions.

Brother workers, your love for the homeland has mixed with your efforts, work, and sacrifice. You know well that the one who builds a factory with his own hands will die in its defense if it is necessary. [applause] Factories are built for the present and for the future to reinforce the fathers' heritage and to guarantee the sons' future. If a man does not defend his fathers' heritage and sons' rights he will not be defending his existence, and this is contrary to nature. Every existing person will fight bravely in defense of his existence if it is exposed to danger. Man's defense of his existence is, in addition to the defense of living existence, a defense of dignity and pride because they are the essence of the living existence. Hence a man in Syria takes the elements of his existence which are linked to the land and factory and which are derived from the present and from the future. The homeland is a fence, land is life, and factories are the future. O brother workers, you have always been the faithful soldiers who defend the homeland and the strong arms that achieve prosperity and progress both in field and factory. [applause and chants]

You made great contributions to building modern institutions, O brothers and sisters, by taking part in making decisions, formulating laws, and endorsing legislation, side by side with the representatives of the people's other sectors in the legislative and executive councils. You are playing your role effectively as members of the People's Assembly; as members of the councils of governorates, citizens, and quarters; and as effective members of the executive committees drawing up plans and executing stages. You are occupying advanced positions on the various levels of the authority's institutions, and you are promoting your union action through dedicating the values of democracy, you are shouldering various forms of responsibility and different levels. As a result, competition among you surfaces; some of you win the trust of others, and you bolster your union role throughout this homeland.

Therefore, you take part in making and implementing decisions; you occupy important positions in the political, legislative, economic, social, health, cultural fields; and you are exercising, through these positions, follow-up, control, and correction operations. Thus, a series of democratic processes is achieved through your union—processes which have become part of our social, economic, and political system. You have made of the unity and cohesion of your class struggle with your national struggle a national example in which you have the right to take pride. Therefore, your interests have been part and parcel of those of the homeland, the homeland's interests are part of the nation's interests, and every one interacts within the framework of a system that achieves cooperation to reach noble goals we all seek. As a result, your persistent work has been organized, your sense of

nationalism has been promoted, and your social loyalty has grown within your union organizations.

It has been a constant principle in the policy of the Corrective Movement to provide opportunities for all the economic functionaries to contribute to the building and prosperity of the homeland. Hence came economic plurality as a fruit of the firm principles on which the Corrective Movement was established. The launching of the public sector was lofty and deep-rooted and gave the material base to develop the private and joint sectors, which are now playing an important role in promoting national growth. We will continue to encourage and promote the three sectors within the framework of a national unity that gets stronger every day.

Syria is enjoying economic stability and steady development activity that gave it, to a large extent, immunity against being affected by economic and social jolts, which have swept many states throughout the world. This stability and growth has been achieved through your efforts and those of your brothers in other sectors of our people. It was also important to expand development control, which you turned from the concept of control of the conduct of individuals into development control monitoring the course of development and coupling conduct with the aim in order to reach that aim and correct the conduct.

This course of economic plurality coincides with a similar course of political pluralism. The masses of citizens joined popular unions and organizations and political parties, which formed a solid national base in modern Syria. [applause and elegant]

This broad national front has enabled our people in Syria to stand proud and firm in the face of all political challenges, fluctuations, and changes. Economic action, when coupled with political action, is bound to melt in the society's crucible. This melting usually creates a qualitative ability that generates an additional resolve to be added to the existing economic and political resources. This ability lies in the social factor. The pillars of the economic structure have been promoted, thanks to your endeavors, and created a status marked by quantitative change, of which we are immensely proud. However, we take greater pride in the transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes, which we are witnessing—something which is indicative of a qualitative change in the pattern of social trends. This development creates a reassuring feeling of happiness, particularly since this quantitative accomplishment in various walks of life has crystallized in Syria in the form of institutions, social relations, awareness, and a proper realization of the responsibilities entailed.

An indication of this is the splendid role being played by Arab women in Syria. Arab women in Syria understand the strategic perspective of the Corrective Movement [applause] regarding the enhancement of women's status in the society. They deemed this perspective a commitment to the social ideals and values which promote development and nurture the sense of responsibility. That is why women, along with men, have taken part in the production process, and made immense sacrifices to safeguard the homeland's pride and freedom. Arab women in Syria realize that their roles in society are bound to enhance their status within the family. The enhancement of their status within the family ensures success in work. When an individual's activities within the family and in his work environment interact and integrate, this means that we are on the threshold of a new phase of social development—one that is marked by balance between rights and duties. On top of all this, Syrian Arab women understand the nature of the relationship existing between freedom and responsibility. Consequently, their social activities within the framework of associations and professional organizations have been consummated. Consequently, they occupy the high-level positions which they deserve and which befit them on all levels. The enhancement of the high status of women is constantly proportionate to the increase in their social awareness and the realization of their hopes in terms of acquiring scientific knowledge as well as technical and professional skills. [applause]

Brothers and sisters... [al-Asad is interrupted by an unidentified speaker from among the audience who praises him] Since its inception, the Corrective Movement's efforts to activate the partisan life of all parties, popular organizations, and professional associations have reflected a strategic policy. Similarly, supporting these organizations reflects a constant course in Syria's policy. We will continue to safeguard this important role. Indeed, it will be enhanced, because its enhancement will enhance the proper democratic and national action. Moreover, democracy is achievable when the participation of individuals is ensured within the context of their parties as well as their economic, social, and political organizations.

Even though our parties, popular organizations, and professional associations are numerous, we will continue to seek, by all means, the formation of more of these organizations. This is because we do not want to see any resources in our country outside the framework of efforts to serve the homeland, even though these resources could be those of individuals.

Brothers, in our country, struggle has developed in various forms. However, in essence, it continues to reflect the people's concerns and aspirations. Your fathers and forefathers fought colonialism when it lay heavily on the homeland. You moved to safeguard the homeland's gains when you felt that the situation demanded. You were engaged in a race with the masses of the people to attain martyrdom when you felt duty called. Now, you are engaged in hard work and sacrifice with a high sense of responsibility. In all that, you have been with your people. In this action and interaction, you have created a militant heritage, which has become part of the Arab nation's heritage. Thus, union action developed in the course of the society's movement. It interacted with the basic objectives aspired by the

masses. Inasmuch as your work carries your forefathers' concerns and feelings, it carries your children's hopes and aspirations. Thus, the shape of your political, economic, and social struggle was determined by the exigencies of the historic stage in question.

The convocation of your 22d congress crowns professional, political, and social activities. You have spent the past months competing among yourselves amid an atmosphere of freedom and with a sense of responsibility. This activity has enabled you to be the union representatives of the broad masses of workers. You have gained the confidence of your colleagues and brothers. Congratulations! [applause] The integration of your labor activity within your union organization with the activity of other popular organizations has become an important trait of our socioeconomic system. The masses of our people are organized within popular and union institutions, all based on representation, election, and free competition. This can be seen in the unions of peasants, handicraftsmen, students, women, youths, teachers, artists, doctors, engineers, lawyers, and other social groups, which have various activities and made contributions to the building of the homeland. I have mentioned all groups so that nobody would feel ignored. [laughter, applause] All such organizations take part in the decisionmaking process, drafting of laws, and approval of legislation concerning them both individually and collectively. All this calls for pride. Our society has developed its democratic experience in a manner that is in keeping with its intellectual and cultural traits. You understand democracy as a means to attain freedom. From this perspective, democracy is a meaningful and organized human activity exercised by the individual to reach a state in which, basically, the freedom of the homeland and the citizen is achieved.

History records that human societies have experienced different forms of political activities. The success or failure of any activity depends on the extent of its interaction with its nation's heritage, reality, and aspirations. In this context, alien activities failed, while genuine models developed and achieved the aspired-for objectives that reflect man's freedom in all its dimensions: man's freedom to work, man's freedom to learn and teach, man's freedom to think and express himself, man's freedom to worship, etcetera. In sum, this means achieving man's freedom to exercise his human existence, given that man is both the end and the means—the end in terms of being the object of efforts to achieve his humanity and existence, and the means in terms of being the tool through which such humanity and existence can be achieved.

O brother workers, you have made great achievements through your correct understanding of democratic action, on which we cannot further elaborate. A quick mention of milestones on the road may be useful for calcifying the meaning and proving the sound course of our people. You have built the material base of economic and social progress. Factories, dams, universities and institutes, educational establishments, including technical and professional ones, have been built. The agricultural sector was developed, irrigation and road networks were expanded, and hospitals were built. There are other achievements in which everyone following the development march in Syria is taking pride and the figures show great development in building our economic, social, cultural, educational, and other institutions.

In addition to the importance of these basic achievements, there is the great achievement represented by achieving national unity, to which people proudly point. The various factions and social levels of the masses of the people strenuously participated, within collective or individual frameworks or through numerous economic and professional activities to reach high degrees of progress and development. It may be possible to achieve a level of material achievement similar to the one achieved in Syria. But the issue in which you and our whole people take pride is that what was achieved falls within the framework of a cohesive national unity, which achieved security and tranquility [applause and slogans] and enhanced stability and progress. This is the national action and the way to build the homeland, which is above every other precious thing and which has nothing similar in our consciences and emotions. There is no value in any life in which man is not effective in achieving strength, good, development, and security for his homeland and the sons of his homeland.

What has been achieved accumulates every year, and this accumulation generates a qualitative change in awareness and the sense of responsibility. What makes us very happy within the framework of the qualitative change is the policy you have accepted and the conduct, which has turned into a norm and a pattern of thought in your professional and union activity—a policy which views the relationship between reality and its development as one containing as much balance and stability as movement and development and as much integration as interaction. Within the framework of integration and interaction, persistent efforts are exerted to achieve cohesion between thought and reality.

O brothers, what you and your people have achieved calls for pride. The material base of the state has been built, and we are still developing our intrinsic experiences and energies. However, the future will need greater efforts to promote our people's achievements and entrench their gains. We also need to promote contributions to building the homeland to achieve a proper abundance of its yield. You express your loyalty and your commitment to the goals and ambitions of the masses through various forms, which are in all cases a subject of the masses' respect and appreciation. One of the most prominent forms is the one that is related to productive work, effective performance, and the true work.

You are in harmony with yourselves because you are free. Any man having the feeling of freedom exercises

harmonious activities, and the relationship among meaningful activity, the sense of tranquility, and enjoying freedom is the one that transfers man from a state of contradiction and loss into a state of stability and affiliation. [applause]

This is how you understand freedom within the framework of responsibility. You distinguish between interaction in an integration framework in order to realize the objective, and contradiction and fragmentation that leads to the loss of effort and power. This is what the comrade federation chairman and other comrades who spoke referred to. [applause]

You have built with your strong arms a developed and important economic base. You contributed to activating social awareness and entrenching national affiliation. Women were involved in various production fields and practiced trade unionist activities. She elected, and she was elected. She was an active member of your trade unionist system.

You have achieved much through illiteracy eradication courses. Your participation was effective in getting rid of illiteracy. Now we are facing a new stage in which this danger has been eliminated, thanks to your efforts and the efforts of your brothers in this homeland. This makes us confident of the future because eliminating illiteracy and ignorance certainly means a better future.

Brothers, through your trade unionist efforts you strengthen a basic pillar for increasing production, and you add another basic pillar, that is not less important. It is your entrenchment of militant values through your production contests in which the honorable competition is manifested between the workers who are involved in the production process.

You are developing a solid national tradition by taking care of the creative and the talented, and dealing well with the most modern developed industrial products in the world, on the basis of exchanging these products, not on a consumption basis. Undoubtedly, what you make bolsters our ability to absorb modern technology and advanced industry in a manner that benefits the society and the homeland in which we live.

O brothers, your role in reinforcing ties of cooperation and solidarity among your brother workers throughout the Arab homeland falls within the general approach of our ceaseless efforts to achieve Arab solidarity. This solidarity becomes more important with the appearance of every challenge facing the Arab nation. As you know, these challenges, which are numerous and varied, are not only linked to the stage of self-defense against an external enemy, but have taken other deep and serious dimensions. Our emphasis on increasing cooperation among the sons of the one Arab nation falls within a basic approach for which Syria has been calling since the outset of the Corrective Movement. This is because cooperation highlights the influence of the Arab nation and its characteristics, saves it from destruction, and gives it a position in this world. It is a pan-Arab and civilized solidarity that strengthens determination, ideals, will; safeguards and strengthens national identity; and positively contributes to mankind's progress. This is the heritage of the Arab nation; it will remain so despite the difficult circumstances obstructing the hopes and aspirations of the Arab nation. As the crises through which the Arab nation has passed created difficult circumstances in the conscience of Arab individual, the most important challenge facing the Arab nation now and in the future will be overcoming these crises.

Perhaps the continuation of these circumstances through which the Arab nation is passing is the most serious thing that concerns the Arab at this stage. What is painful and infuriating is that some people in the nation are responsible for the emergence of these difficult circumstances and for hampering efforts to overcome them. So these circumstances are continuously fuelled by the nation's enemies.

If the Arabs fail to be aware of what is around them, and if they do not pay attention to the developments and changes taking place, we will face in the near or distant future even more difficult circumstances as a result of this unawareness. This should prompt our attention and restore our sharp awareness in order to maintain our land, interests, and dignity. [applause] This warning and an awareness of anything new are beneficial to us and to others in developing our potential and capabilities to preserve our existence and all its rights, and to contribute to human civilization.

The circumstances through which the Arab nation is currently passing and the great challenges it is facing render Arab solidarity, which is based on common destiny, cooperation, and cohesion, vital for the nation's survival and confrontation of the challenges threatening its entity and existence and seeking to subjugate it and exhaust its resources. Perhaps the greatest challenge threatening our pan-Arab entity is the phenomenon of fragmentation, and the tireless efforts to realize narrow and transient interests that do not conform to unified pan-Arab interest. Others' attempts to control and monopolize our pan-Arab wealth come to add new sources of threat to the already existing ones, with new shapes and styles rarely known in the past.

If we want to rise to the level of responsibility and circumstances, then Arab solidarity is a correct action and path, and a way out whose fruits all of us will reap. [applause and chants] Throughout their history, the Arabs' greatest achievements have been accompanied with the manifestations and effectiveness of solidarity, cooperation, and cohesion in all long historical stages, while the features of retreat were clear whenever the phenomenon of fragmentation and division emerged.

All this calls on us to stress that through Arab solidarity the crisis and the difficult circumstances facing the nation can be overcome, especially since the world is now moving along a road that is different from the one it

followed in the past. International issues now have become different from what they used to be in the past.

If Arab solidarity is an urgent need for the Arabs, and a vital need to pan-Arab interests, then this need is more urgent and more vital when we know that these challenges are really threatening our pan-Arab entity and our entire existence. All Arabs must realize that they are all in danger, without any exception.

Dear brothers [applause], when Syria speaks of solidarity, its talk is based on a full-blown perspective, primarily based on the Arab nation's common destiny and also on a noble legacy, during which the Arabs scored, while united, victories that contributed to the progress of human civilization. This relationship between the past and what we desire for the future must not be distorted by crises which, within the context of human history, are deemed transient crises. Arab solidarity, as we view it, is positive. Its role in peacetime is of similar importance to its role during the phase of confronting aggression. In both cases, it is a pan-Arab, human, and cultural necessity. The Arab nation contributed to the building of the edifice of human civilization in the past. Indeed, it laid the foundations on which contemporary civilization was based. Given logical reasoning and the current state of affairs, there is nothing that could prevent this nation from effecting a new renaissance to enhance its creative contributions. As a matter of fact, it must do so. [applause]

The Arab nation's resources are numerous and multifaceted. This nation possesses spiritual and material resources: Resources based on history, geography, territory in terms of what is both above and under it, as well as Arab individuals and the broad Arab masses, who are capable of making sacrifices when the need arises. We believe that the Arab nation will once again revive its pride, build its civilization, and make forceful contributions toward enriching life on earth. [applause]

Dear brother citizens: We must remain vigilant. It is impermissible for us to become prey for negligence or carelessness. The world around us is feeling tremors taking it in various directions and showing conflicting eruptions, even though the endings of these developments are predictable. The peace process on which we embarked is still deadlocked. This was not unexpected. When the U.S. peace initiative was presented, we agreed to it because it was in harmony with the UN resolutions, and on the basis of implementing them. This is what we have been underscoring, particularly since 1973. We have been constantly demanding the achievement of a just peace on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 338 and 242, which is included in Resolution 338 as an article enshrined in it. Many foreign countries and parties have shown concern for peace in this region over the past years. They used to bring up the issue with us. For our part, we affirmed our desire for peace and explained our endeavors to achieve it. However, it was our conviction that the Israeli leaders neither desired nor sought peace. They want to maintain their occupation of Arab territories and to expand the occupied territories under their control. In our meetings and talks with foreign officials who visited us or whom we visited, as well as in our statements, we affirmed this stand. When the United States launched its initiative, which stated that the solution will be based on the relevant two UN resolutions, the principle of trading land for peace, and the convocation of an international conference under the auspices of the United States and the then Soviet Union, which was convened in Madrid; and when the U.S. Administration demonstrated seriousness in all the discussions held between us and it—given all this—we approved this initiative.

The meetings of the Arab and Israeli delegations began and are still going on. But until this moment Israel has not offered anything new that opens up the road of peace. What they are saying today and calling new, as you hear in the media, was heard a long time ago. They say that they now approve Resolution 242, and they consider it to be new in their position. In reality, it is not new because they approved it after it was issued in 1967. Israel not only approved it, but also dealt with international initiatives and efforts based on it. For example, the international mediator, Gunar Jarring, a name we still remember, made many tours and held many contacts between Israel and a number of Arab confrontation states at the instructions of the Security Council to carry out that resolution. There were the initiatives of Rogers and Shultz, U.S. secretaries of state, at subsequent intervals.

All these initiatives and endeavors were based on Resolution 242. What is new when they now say: We approve Resolution 242? They also said that they might partially withdraw from the Golan and that that was new, as they and some states say. But we heard this when it was new and have actually applied it on the ground since 1974 within the framework of the disengagement of forces agreement on the Syrian front, following the war of attrition, which was an extension of the October war. [applause] That agreement was based, as it stipulates, on Security Council Resolution 338, of which Resolution 242 forms a part. In accordance with this agreement, the Israeli forces withdrew partially from the occupied Syrian land in the Golan, on the understanding that the disengagement of forces agreement was not a peace agreement, as the agreement itself stipulates. A special provision in the agreement says: This agreement, I mean the disengagement agreement, is not a peace agreement, but a step toward a just and lasting peace based on Security Council Resolution 338, dated 22 October 1973, on the understanding that this agreement was signed on 31 May 1974 in Geneva under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of U.S. and Soviet representatives.

This explains that the partial withdrawal is not new and that a partial withdrawal will not achieve peace, but only a step toward peace, as stipulated in the agreement. Are these talks being held on achieving peace or on another

step toward peace? The disengagement agreements stipulate that peace can be achieved on the basis of Resolutions 338, including Resolution 242. It does not call for a partial withdrawal as a step toward achieving peace but for a withdrawal from all parts, which constitute all steps that can achieve peace, and that a partial withdrawal constitutes a step toward peace and will not achieve peace.

In light of this, what is new in their proposal and what is new that signals that they are serious about achieving peace. I do not want to elaborate on what they have proposed, although I have referred to the two main points of their proposal. However, I say we want peace. We have said this and repeated it for about 20 years. But peace is not something that can be sold or bought; it is an issue of rights and commitments—rights which should return completely to their owners [applause] without any relinquishment, as well as commitments by all parties to peace and security, provided that the security of one party is not at the expense of any other party.

Anyway, we will continue the peace process, since we have already started it, but not indefinitely. If Israel is serious about peace, it should respond to the resolutions of international legitimacy and the UN Charter. Despite our definite desire for peace it will never be at the expense of the territory [applause] because the Arabs, with the Syrian people in the forefront, will not relinquish their territory no matter how many years, decades, or generations it takes [applause] because territory is the dearest—it is dignity, it is the homeland. [applause]

Brothers, we must note with satisfaction, happiness, and pleasure the healthy and sound situation that fraternal Lebanon has achieved. [applause] We note Lebanon's triumph over all difficulties that faced it on the path to recovery. These difficulties were among the fiercest and most complicated difficulties that can face any group of people—if not the fiercest and most complicated of all. We can say that Lebanon has left behind long years of suffering, pain, death, and bloodshed. During the past months, Lebanon has managed to hold general parliamentary elections and has renewed its constitutional establishments. This has boosted Lebanese legitimacy and increased the citizens' optimism and assurance. Everyone is now looking forward to the removal of the traces of the civil war. This will certainly be achieved, although it needs an appropriate length of time. [applause] The Syrians are among the happiest people with the development of the situation in Lebanon. The Syrians have lived with their Lebanese brothers' pain and hopes and shared with them sacrifice with all that it means. The Syrians could not have done otherwise. One cannot stand unmoved while his brother is being slain in the street, at home, in the village, in the city, or in the neighborhood. A brother must bear his responsibility [applause] to support another brother and bear all ensuing burdens and consequences in all their details. This is what has happened, and what should happen. This is because the same group of people does not let a part of it surrender to a meaningless death. Greetings to Lebanon and the citizens of Lebanon. Greetings to militant Lebanon. [applause] Greetings to militant, resistant, and Arab Lebanon. [applause]

Brother workers, as the convocation of your congress coincides with our people marking the 22d anniversary of the Corrective Movement, [applause] it also coincides with our brother peasants marking their day, the 28th anniversary of the establishment of their popular organization—the General Peasants Federation—[applause] which was established under the 8 March revolution. [applause] This organization has grown and enjoyed its higher status under the Corrective Movement. [applause]

Your brothers the peasants, like you, are participating in decisionmaking, drafting laws, and endorsing legislation. They have their representatives in the legislative and executive councils. They also play their role with effectiveness as members of the People's Assembly; the councils of provinces, cities, and areas; and the executive committees in charge of planning and implementation. [applause]

The peasants, who are the majority of the people, are the ones who struggled with bitterness for a long time before seizing their rights. They shed blood and offered martyrs in resisting injustice to achieve the homeland's independence, dignity, and pride. Their role in defending the homeland by themselves and through their valiant sons in the Armed Forces is a basic one. [applause]

The peasants' struggle and the party's concern for their issues have the credit for the big change in the life of the peasants and in the continuous progress which life in the rural areas has witnessed. They are the picture of graciousness and the symbol of faithfulness and giving. Their efforts have produced increasing growth in the agricultural field and profound progress which is increasing every year in maintaining food security for the homeland and, in some areas, providing quantities for export, thereby, strengthening the gross national product. [applause]

On behalf of all of you, I greet our brothers and sons, the peasants, on their day. I greet them as well as their families in their villages and in all sites of production. I affirm to them that the state will continue to take care of them and of their issues. I call on them to embrace the land which embraced our generations over years, to hold to it, and to exert more efforts on it so that it will yield more. [applause and chants]

Brother workers, I was briefed on your general report which extensively deals with many important topics. There is no doubt that you will tackle all issues in light of public national interests, as you always did. Your proposals and decisions will be appreciated and followed up on. [applause and chants]

I greet you from my heart, wishing you success. I also greet all our workers wherever they are. [applause] I welcome the guests, brothers, and friends. [applause] I

greet them, wishing them a good stay among their brothers and sisters. [applause]

Greetings to our brave and faithful soldiers and the honest guard of this homeland. [applause] Greetings to our steadfast kinsfolk in occupied Golan. [applause] Greetings to the brave sons of the intifadah and our Palestinian people in the occupied territories. [applause and chants] Greetings and glory to the martyrs, our most important weapon in all times and in the time in which there are no weapons. God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you. [applause and chants]

Al-Shar', U.S. Congressmen Discuss Peace Talks

JN1212200992 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in 1830 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Farouq al-Shar' this evening received a U.S. Congressional delegation led by Senator David Boren, and including Senator Claiborne Pell and Senator Carl Levin, the three representing Senate select committees. Christopher Ross, U.S. ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting. They spoke about the Washington peace talks, and al-Shar' told them Syria was pursuing a just and comprehensive peace. The head of the U.S. delegation said he hoped the incoming U.S. Administration of President-elect Bill Clinton would push the peace process forward. The two sides also discussed relations between Syria and the United States.

Vice President Meets Delegation

JN1312161692 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received a U.S. congressional delegation led by Senator David Boren at 1030 today.

The U.S. ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting during which discussion revolved around the Middle East situation and recent developments in the regional peace process.

Minister Comments on U.S. Terrorism List

NC1212093092 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 10 Dec 92 p 6

[Report by Hurriyah Ahmad Husayn in Damascus]

[Excerpts] Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salman has affirmed that the Damascus Declaration, from both its security and economic aspects, has died because it was born under abnormal circumstances.

In statements to AL-AHRAM, he called for coordination among the Arab delegations participating in the Arab-Israeli peace talks. He affirmed that Syria will not accept a unilateral solution. Salman said Syria is the first country to have called for coordination among the Arab sides in the peace talks out of its belief that the solution should be satisfactory to all parties. He pointed out that the continuing meetings of the Arab cordon states—the most recent of which was the Beirut meeting last week—affirm the Arab unity in confronting the continuing Israeli attempts to prove the contrary. History has taught us that no bilateral relations guarantee the commitments of the Israeli side. [passage omitted]

He affirmed that Israel wants to keep Syria on the list of terrorist countries. Consequently, the United States also is following this line. We object to and condemn acts of terrorism. There is no evidence that Syria is involved in terrorist acts. How can it be believed that Syria is a terrorist state when the U.S. President meets with President al-Asad, when the United States has an embassy in Damascus, and when the U.S. secretary of state has come to Syria scores of times?

Vice President Receives UN Fact-Finding Team

JN1212191202 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in 1830 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received a UN press team exploring facts on the Arab-Israeli conflict at 1030 today. The meeting was attended by Information Minister Muhammad Salman.

Discussion revolved around the situation in the Middle East, developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the peace process.

The vice president explained Syria's stand toward the issues of discussion.

UN Team Discusses Peace Talks

JN1312080292 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Excerpt] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam yesterday received a UN media team charged with exploring facts pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Information Minister Dr. Muhammad Salman attended the meeting.

The talks dealt with the situation in the Middle East region, developments of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the peace process. The vice president explained Syria's positions toward the issues discussed.

Foreign Minister Farouq al-Shar' also received the UN media team yesterday. The UN team, which is currently visiting Syria, is headed by Mostafa Tolaymi. The minister welcomed members of the media team, and answered their questions on the regional state of affairs, developments of the peace process, and future prospects of the ongoing bilateral Washington talks. He also answered their questions regarding Syria's foreign policy on both the Arab and international scenes. [passage omitted covered on reference item]

Al-Shar' Returns to Damascus From Cairo 14 Dec

JN1412182692 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1755 GMT 14 Dec 92

[Text] Damascus, 14 Dec (SANA)—Foreign Minister Farouq al-Shar' returned to Damascus this evening from Cairo where he met with Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and delivered to him a letter from President Hafiz al-Asad.

He was seen off at Cairo International Airport by 'Amr Musa, Egyptian foreign minister; Dr. ' Izz Darwish, Syrian ambassador to Cairo; and embassy staff.

Minutes of Talks With CSFR Delegation Signed

JN1112090892 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 10 Dec 92

[Text] Official talks between a Syrian delegation under Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, and a Czechoslovak delegation, led by Rudolf Filkus, first deputy prime minister of the CSFR, concluded at the Prime Ministry at 1900 today. Members of delegations from the two countries attended.

During this session of talks, a comprehensive review was made of existing economic and commercial ties between the two countries, including investment projects being carried out by Czechoslovak parties. The conferees also discussed all issues related to these projects.

The two sides agreed to stress their desire to strengthen joint cooperation and broaden its fields, particularly in the electricity projects at Tishrin Dam and the (Ya'lah) station, as well as in the field of the metal, chemical and petrochemical industries, and cement, food processing, and textiles.

The two sides also agreed to strengthen cooperation in the field of air transportation, aircraft maintenance, telecommunications, transport projects, and providing spare parts for various equipment.

The delegations emphasized the establishment of joint ventures and established formulas for investment projects.

The two sides underlined their interest in maintaining and strengthening their ties of friendship and cooperation to achieve common goals.

At the end of the session, joint minutes of the talks were signed by Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, and Rudolf Filkus, first deputy prime minister of the CSFR.

Czechoslovakian Delegation Departs

JN1112160892 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 11 Dec 92

[Text] Rudolf Filkus, first deputy prime minister of Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, and his delegation left Damascus at noon today at the end of a [illegible]-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic.

He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, and the ministers of economy and foreign trade, finance, and planning.

Afghanistan

Spokesman Says Presidential Elections Delayed

BK1512125492 Hong Kong AFP in English 1250 GMT 15 Dec 92

[By Terrence White]

[Text] Kabul, Dec 15 (AFP)—Elections to find a new Afghan president were delayed Tuesday after the rumble of heavy artillery shook the capital overnight.

A Defence Ministry spokesman told AFP the elections would take place "tomorrow or the day after."

"We are not too concerned about final dates," the spokesman said after admitting that most of the delegates from Afghanistan's 29 provinces had failed to turn up for the council meeting, or shura, to elect a replacement for interim President Burhanuddin Rabbani, whose 5-1/2 month term is over.

Some 1,500 representatives were to attend the meeting but many had been kept away by bad weather and security concerns, the spokesman said.

He denied that representatives were staging a boycott of the elections in which Rabbani is standing against at least two other candidates for a further interim term of up to two years, after which general elections are to be held.

The fundamentalist Hezb-e Eslami party of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who launched an attack on the capital in August and whose troops are still positioned outside the city, has strongly opposed holding the election under current conditions.

Presidential spokesman 'Abdul Aziz Mowjd said last week that the shura would last up to three days and the president would be elected on the first day. This would avoid the creation of "a power vacuum in the country."

Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud said the shura would be held despite attempts "to sabotage it by irresponsible armed groups."

Meanwhile Defence Ministry forces under Mas'ud and units of Hekmatyar's rebel faction clashed late Monday on the eastern limits of the capital which resounded to the thud of heavy artillery and the rattle of machine guns.

Mas'ud's personal Tajik Shura-ye Nezar forces said they had come under fire from Hezb forces from dusk to midnight.

"They attacked from all directions except from behind, coming on foot with rockets but not tanks," said one teenaged Shura-ye Nezar soldier.

The Hezb have closed in on the eastern city limits and taken several Defence Ministry positions while government forces were engaged with another mujahedin faction elsewhere in the capital.

The neutral Pashtun buffer forces, installed with great fanfare after the August ceasefire between the Defence Ministry and Hezb, were nowhere to be seen Tuesday.

Defence Ministry officials have lately announced the defections of some important Hezb commanders to the government side, and many of their troops are reported to be gathering in the northern Kabul district of Khair Khana.

"They are here to provide security for the Shura-ye Hal wa 'Aqd," said a Defence Ministry official, giving the official name for the election meeting.

Mojaddedi Opposes Extending Rabbani's Term

LD1512135592 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom to Pashto to Afghanistan 0830 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Hazrat-e Sebghatullah Mojaddedi, leader of Jabha-e Nejat-e Meli, said during an interview that the tenure of [President] Rabbani should not be extended even for an hour and his authority should be transferred to another of the leaders. The leader of the Jabha-e Nejat-e Meli formation and member of the Jehadi Council was speaking to a BBC correspondent in Kabul. The (Jehadi Council) must decide to transfer power from Rabbani and his tenure of office cannot be extended even for an hour. State power must be transferred to another leader, he said.

In a reply to a question regarding his stand in connection with the statement by the Central Commission of th Shura-e Ahl-e Hal Wa Aqd which said that the Shura was to be convened in a few days, Hazrat-e Sebghatullah Mojaddedi said: This announcement was not made by the above commission but was made by (?Mola) Emad alone. The commission decided that the time is not right for the convening of the Shura, and you know this.

In reply to another question [words indistinct] he said: Everyone will accept what the majority of members decide in this matter.

Political Manoeuvres Heighten as Rabbani Term Ends

BK1512130992 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 15 Dec 92 p 1

[Text] As the presidential term of Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani is expiring today (December 15), behind-the-scene and politicking have been accelerated in Afghanistan.

In Kabul Mowlawi Mohammad Yunus Khalis, leader of his own faction of Hezb-e Eslami in his campaign met Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani and Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud on Monday.

The presidential tenure of Prof. Rabbani was extended by 45 days which expires today (Monday). Kabul has become the focal point of activities of all frontline leaders like former president of Afghanistan Prof. Sebghatullah Mojaddedi, leader of Mahaz-e Meli-e Eslami-e.

Pir Seyyed Ahmad Gilani, Mowlawi Yunes, are arriving in Kabul while Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar, chief of the HIA [Hezb-e Eslami], is present at his military base in Chartasyab, south of Kabul.

The announcement of Mowlawi Khales to participate in the presidential elections has triggered speculations. A meeting of Prof. Rabbani and Mowlawi Khales was held in which Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud and naib ameer of Hezb-e Eslami (Khales) were also present. Pakistan's ambassador in Kabul Amir Uraman also met Mowlawi Khales at his residence.

Meanwhile, according to ANA, the Hezb-e Eslam-e amir, Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar, has strongly reacted to the intentions of the interim President Prof. Rabbani to further extend his rule until the establishment of the proposed Ahle-Helo-Aqd shura as his term expires today.

New Military Commanders Appointed

LD1512213492 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] On the basis of a proposal by the Ministry of Defense and the approval of the Presidency of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, the following appointments have been made in the Ministry of Defense:

Esteemed Sayd Najmoddin Khan Waseq as commander of the Sixth Army Corps.

Esteemed Mohammad 'Aref, as deputy commander of the Sixth Army Corps.

Esteemed Mohammad Amir, as commander of Konduz Division.

Esteemed 'Abdol Bashir Khalid, as commander of Badakhshan Division.

Bangladesh

Begum Zia Addresses Nation on Victory Day Eve

BK1512155392 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1330 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Address to the nation by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on the eve of the Victory Day; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] Dear countrymen! Peace be upon you. Tomorrow, the 16th of December, is our great Victory Day. Let me extend my sincere greetings to you on the eve of the Victory Day. On this day 21 years ago, we had secured victory through the process of freedom struggle. We had ensured the emergence of a nation. The 16th of December is a glorious day marked by courage and sacrifice and joy and sorrow. On the Victory Day of Bangladesh, I respectfully remember the gallant martyrs of the freedom struggle who ensured the freedom of our motherland by sacrificing their lives. I pray to God, the most merciful, for the salvation of their souls. I pay my tribute to the fallen freedom fighters who sacrificed their present for a beautiful future.

The emergence of an independent and sovereign Bangladesh is an incomparable and unforgettable incident in the history of the subcontinent. Our victory has proved that a united and determined nation can turn an impossible thing into a reality. We have proved that a mass of people when united can determine their fate themselves. The glory of our freedom struggle can be attributed to only ourselves. This freedom is not anyone's charity out of mercy. We had fought for the establishment of a happy and prosperous country and for economic emancipation. We launched the war of independence for our own culture. The goal of our war of independence was to establish a democratic and poverty-free society.

Dear countrymen! Today, we have restored democracy in Bangladesh through nine years of prolonged and uncompromising struggle against the autocratic rule. All of you took equal part in the struggle for democracy as you did in the struggle for independence. You know that an accountable government has been established in the country. We have to protect today the democracy which we secured through incalculable sacrifice. I seek the cooperation of all of you in the efforts for stabilizing democracy in the country.

We have been moving forward in fulfilling the pledges which we made to the people after assuming the office of the government. We have already achieved considerable success in this regard. Parliamentary democracy has been established in the country. Complete freedom of the press has been ensured and the freedom of speech has been established. The judiciary is now free. We have freed the country's dilapidated economy from the clutches of chaos and corruption and taken steps to put it on the right track. As a result, we have been achieving continuous success in the economic sphere. Our per capita income which in 1990 was U.S. $170, has risen to $208 today. We have considerably reduced the inflation rate which has now come down to 4.5 percent. Our foreign exchange reserve has exceeded the all-time record. Foreign exports are expected to exceed this year's target. A recent report of the International Monetary Fund said that the present government has been successful in rejuvenating and stabilizing the worn-out economy of the last decade. In food production, the reserves this year have (?increased). Development of the economic infrastructure, construction and development activities are going on in a fast pace. Massive programs have been undertaken for expansion of the communication network. We have been securing the confidence of foreign investors. We are getting ready to face the challenge of the 21st Century. Loans of peasants have been waived. We have allocated maximum funds for the educational sector. Concrete steps have been taken to curb terrorism in the educational campus and throughout the country. We are committed to provide food to everyone.

Dear Countrymen! We want peace and order. We would like to establish an excellent society. We would like to let

the countrymen have a taste of prosperity. We believe in the policy of friendship with all countries, with malice to none. We believe in peaceful coexistence and in the policy of interstate cooperation in various fields. With this objective in view, and in order to to ensure the welfare of South Asian nations, martyr President Ziaur Rahman had taken the step to establish the regional cooperative forum of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, SAARC. We are working for eradication of poverty and development of human resources in the region while upholding the SAARC spirit. What is regrettable is that tension continued in the contemporary world despite the end of the war of nerves. Very recently, the about 450-year-old Babri Mosque was demolished in our neighboring country due to the abhorrent attempts by fundamentalist Hindus. The people from all walks of life in Bangladesh have been deeply anguished over the incident. We strongly condemned the incident. We have also demanded reconstruction of the Babri Mosque. We feel that it is difficult to describe in letters how the incident of demolition of the Babri Mosque has severely injured the religious feelings and values of Muslims. I, however, on behalf of the government, would like to thank all in Bangladesh for the way they maintained law and order and communal harmony despite this provocation. We have to remain calm even in the face of all provocative incidents. We have to maintain communal harmony. Communal harmony is a glowing heritage of Bangladesh. I again call upon you to maintain peace and harmony in the society in keeping with the great Islamic values.

Dear countrymen! The dream which inspired us to wage the liberation war was the establishment of an independent, sovereign, (?enlightened) and democratic country. Therefore, once again I invite you all today to unitedly work for the realization of that dream. Let us unitedly affirm our firm commitment that we will protect the hard-won independence and democracy. We will eradicate poverty and build a modern and prosperous Bangladesh. Once again, I extend my greetings to all of you. May God help us. May God take care of you. Long Live Bangladesh.

India

Islamabad, Dhaka Propaganda on Ayodhya Criticized

BK1512160792 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] India has said the attempts in certain countries, especially by Pakistan and Bangladesh, to portray the happenings in Ayodhya as affecting the safety of minorities in the country is motivated and wrong. Briefing newsmen, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said the Indian Government's statements and actions highlight the commitment to its constitutional obligation to provide security to all minorities. He said the Government has taken a number of steps to restore normalcy which include banning of communal organizations and arrest of their leaders. In contrast, the leaders in Pakistan and Bangladesh made inflammatory speeches, encouraged and participated in attacks on temples and other holy shrines. The spokesman said India has taken up this issue with Islamabad and Dhaka.

In reply to a question, the spokesman said there were incidents in West Asian countries, but the governments there took swift and firm action.

BJP-Run State Governments Dismissed

BK1612005892 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] governments in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh have been dismissed and the state assemblies dissolved. The president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, issued a proclamation to this effect in New Delhi last night imposing president's rule in these states. The decision followed a meeting of the union cabinet yesterday evening which recommended to the president dismissal of these governments. The cabinet took the decision after receiving reports of the governors of these states. Their reports say that these state governments failed to handle the law and order situation and therefore they cannot function in accordance with the constitutional provisions. Following this, advisers to the state governors in all the three states have also been appointed. Mr. Ajit Singh, Mr. Arun Pandya and Mr. Brahm Swarup are advisers to the Madhya Pradesh governor, while Mr. B.B.L. Mathur, Mr. L.M. Gupta and Mr. O.P. Tandon are for the Rajasthan governor. The adviser to the Himachal Pradesh governor is Mr. P.P. Srivastava. Soon after the president's proclamation, the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, called on Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma at Rashtrapati Bhavan [president house]. This was the second meeting of Mr. Rao with the president yesterday.

The dismissal of the BJP governments and imposition of president's rule have been welcomed by the Congress-I and left parties, while it has been criticized by the BJP. The major political parties in their statements said that there was no option left before the center as these states had resorted to subverting the Supreme Court decision, the constitution and the parliament.

The Congress-I spokesman, Mr. Chandulal Chandrakar, said that while taking the decision the prime minister has lived up to the people's expectations. The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] general secretary, Mr. Harkishen Singh Surjeet, said that these state governments had no moral authority to continue as they were openly active in mobilizing the kar sevaks [volunteers for temple construction] in Ayodhya. The CPI [Communist Party of India] National Council secretary, Mr. Chaturanan Mishra, said these governments defended the antinational activities in Ayodhya challenging the Supreme Court, the parliament, the constitution and the press.

The Janata Dal leader, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, said as these BJP governments have integrated themselves with the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh], there was no alternative before the center except dismissing them. The Janata Dal-A president, Mr. Ajit Singh, welcomed

the decision and said that this is a right direction in fighting communalism. The West Bengal chief minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, also described the center's move as a right step. The Bihar chief minister, Mr. Lalu Parsaad Yadav, said this is a delayed step taken by the center.

The BJP leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has termed the dismissal of the governments in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh as a declaration of war against democracy. In his reaction, he said if the prime minister thinks that he has done the right thing, he should dissolve the Lok Sabha and seek a fresh mandate from the people.

The Himachal Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Shanta Kumar, described it as an unconstitutional decision taken in haste. The Rajasthan chief minister, Mr. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, described the decision as most unconstitutional and politically based on the internal fighting in the Congress-I. The Madhya Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Sundar Lal Patwa, declined to make any comment.

The former Tamil Nadu chief minister and the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazagham] chief, Mr. Karunanidhi, described the dismissal as a disrespect to the constitution. The former information and broadcasting minister, Mr. P. Upendra, said that the decision of the center is regrettable.

Curfew Tightened in 2 States

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[Text] In Uttar Pradesh, the situation in the curfew-bound areas has almost returned to normal. An official spokesman told our Lucknow correspondent that the day curfew is likely to be lifted in more areas today following considerable improvement in the situation. The curfew is being relaxed today in a phased manner in the remaining cities and towns.

In Rajasthan, an indefinite curfew has been clamped in the municipal council area of Udaipur city from 0600 as a precautionary measure in view of the call for the statewide bundh [strike] by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. In Madhya Pradesh, the relaxation of curfew announced in parts of Bhopal city from today has been withdrawn as a precaution in view of the dismissal of the BJP government in the state.

In Gujarat, the situation remained peaceful last night and no untoward incident has been reported from any part of the state. In view of the improved situation, curfew will be relaxed today in phases in Ahmedabad.

In Bihar, with rapid improvement in the overall situation, the curfew is being lifted from Darbhanga town while further relaxation is being given in most of the 11 curfew-bound areas. In Ranchi, the curfew has been relaxed for 11 hours from 0600 to 1700 today.

The situation in Delhi is peaceful. The authorities have announced a curfew relaxation from 0700 to 1600 in the walled city, and from 0830 to 1030 in trans-Yamuna areas today.

In Punjab, about 50 leaders of the banned organizations have been arrested and offices of these organizations sealed. The Chandigarh administration has arrested seven leaders of the RSS, VHP [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Vishwa Hindu Parishad] and Bajrang Dal. They included the retired chief justice, Mr. Justice J.B. Gupta, president of the Punjab unit of the RSS.

Lok Sabha Adjourned After Uproar by BJP MP's

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[Text] After seven day's of adjournment, the Lok Sabha resumed its winter session this morning. But had to be adjourned till 1600 today because of continuous uproar. As the house began, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] members insisted that Mr. L.K. Advani, be brought to the house for a meaningful discussion on the current situation in the country. The Congress-I and the non-BJP opposition members held that it is undemocratic to postpone the discussions because of the absence of a particular member. Earlier, the speaker, Mr. Shivraj Patil, suspended the question hour saying that several members have given notices for a discussion on many issues related to the current situation in the country following the Ayodhya developments. After repeated interruptions, he allowed Mr. Jaswant Singh, BJP, to initiate the discussion. But Mr. Singh could not go far because of uproarious scenes and continued interruptions leading to adjournment.

The Rajya Sabha which also met after a week's adjournment however adopted a resolution strongly condemning the demolition of the Babri Masjid [mosque] at Ayodhya. The resolution was moved by the home minister and the leader of the house, Mr. S.B. Chavan, amidst slogan-shouting by BJP members. The resolution says that the Rajya Sabha strongly and unequivocally condemns the desecration and demolition of the mosque by and at the instigation of forces represented among others by the VHP, RSS [Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] and Bajrang Dal which led to communal violence in the country. Such vandalism was carried out not only in violation of the Supreme Court order, but also amounted to attacking the secular foundations of our constitution, it added. In the resolution, the house also expressed its anguish at the happenings and reiterated its resolve to ceaselessly endeavor to uphold the secular and democratic traditions and to maintain the rule of law.

Iran

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Delivers Budget Bill to Majles

NC1512150092 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0700 GMT 15 Dec 92

["Major parts" of President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's speech to the Majles presenting the budget bill for 1372, year beginning 21 March 1993, on 15 December—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the almighty and merciful. May the blessings of God and his prophet be upon you. I congratulate all our people, the esteemed leader, and you—the esteemed deputies of the Majles—on the blessed birthday of Fatimah Zahra and of our late imam, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The 1372 budget bill is presented to the esteemed Majles when Iran's sacred system marks its 14th anniversary. In this time our country has lived through extremely sensitive and fateful times and momentous incidents. With God's will, it has emerged from each of these successfully, proudly, and better prepared.

This era will be marked in our history by faith, devotion, selflessness, and efforts. We must recall the figures who have shone in this era, especially the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the late imam; the lofty martyrs of the revolution and the imposed war; the selfless combatants; and the dear disabled and prisoners of war.

I thank God almighty that during the current government's term the country has taken major steps toward reconstruction and toward putting the general situation in order after the imposed war, by starting various processes and by paving the grounds for cultural, economic, social, and administrative activities. Undoubtedly, any fair comparison of the country's current conditions with those at the end of the imposed war—even from an ordinary and nonexpert viewpoint—proves this.

The government is presenting its fourth budget to the legislature. Each budget has had its specific philosophy and objectives and been compiled to implement part of the government's plans and objectives. Fortunately the third term of the Majles cooperated in discussing and approving the government's program, especially the first five-year plan. This played a considerable part in existing successes.

Because every budget represents a government's annual program and carves out the country's economic future for one year and with the 1372 budget being the first to be discussed by the esteemed fourth term of the Majles, I must inform the esteemed deputies of some points on the processes and general conditions of the country's economy as well as next year's outlook.

The country's economy and the coming year form the framework for compiling the 1372 budget, so these conditions must be considered in discussing and approving the budget.

From the start the government's major policy and objective has been attention to the country's development and progress. I consider the Islamic Republic of Iran's not remaining backward to be a definite assumption. The government has done everything it could to achieve this objective to place the country in a process of constant and dynamic development stemming from creativity and general efforts.

This goal has been pursued during the three years my government has been in office and the government will continue to maintain this stance with all its might and by considering everything. This choice called for making extremely difficult decisions and implementing constant and painstaking reforms. And this demanded a considerable portion of government time in past years.

Perhaps the easiest economic stance for the government would have been to use its income from oil exports to import consumer goods and distribute these goods among the people using coupons or other methods. This would ensure a comfortable life for many people; distributing imported raw materials would ensure comfort and a ready income by creating the ground for middlemen in urban areas. As a result, the government would not have had to endanger itself by making decisions unprecedented among our country's governments.

Although immediate solutions would have been found had this policy been adopted, it would have gradually destroyed economic structures, prevented the growth and expansion of the country's potential, and seen the country sink into poverty and backwardness. My view, that of the government, and my hopes do not conform with such a situation.

The current government will do whatever it can and will make the necessary decisions to place the Islamic Republic of Iran on a path of growth and progress so that, God willing, we will have a free and developed country with a worthy place in the world today.

Usually, any type of decision on economic and social issues faces the danger of unforeseeable and foreseeable results and unfavorable and expected consequences. Fortunately, in the first years of the first five-year plan, the government scored spectacular successes and many of the concerns that existed at the outset of the government's plans now seem baseless and unjustified.

In the topics I will propound, the country's economic processes during recent years will be discussed in further detail and the strong and weak points of this term will be presented to the esteemed deputies. We will glance at the past before entering a relatively lengthy discussion to explain the 1372 budget.

I will now discuss the past. The imposed war and incidents before 1367 [year beginning 21 March 1988] led to a large drop in the country's production. Thus, the government's greatest objective in adopting new economic policies can be said to be growth in the country's production. This objective led to an average growth in 1368-70 [1989-91] of 8.3 percent a year in the gross national product at stable prices, which had dropped to 7.3 percent during 1364-67 [1985-88]. We went further than the growth envisaged in the first five-year plan, which many considered unachievable.

Information on growth in the various economic fields can offer a clearer picture. In the past three years and by adopting the policy of guaranteed prices and transfer to farmers of part of the subsidies used by this sector, we witnessed an average growth of 5.6 percent in added value. This led to imports of basic products such as wheat and barley falling drastically, so much that despite the growth in population and growth in per capita consumption in the country, wheat imports in 1370 dropped to under half the imports in 1367. This saw barley imports fall to a very low level and helped to achieve an increase in agricultural products.

The successes that were scored in the industrial field are extremely significant. During the past three years the added value of the industrial and mining sector has increased by an average of about 15 percent. These are all at stable prices. This amount is much greater than this if computed at current prices. During this same period the added value of the heavy industries sector grew by 45 percent and we know that growth in heavy industries has a serious impact on other sectors. This can play an extremely important role in the creation of the country's production capacities.

In this sector in 1370 [1991] we witnessed the production of 2.4 million tonnes of steel; 103,000 tonnes of copper; and 73,000 tonnes of aluminum. During the first eight months of this year, we have exported 400,000 tonnes—390,000 tonnes—of steel. You know that this means a great deal to this industry.

As far as the petrochemical industries are concerned, production growth has been very substantial, so much so that production in this sector in 1370 reached 3.65 million tonnes.

As for investment, which is among the very important indicators related to this era—unfortunately the situation during past eras was poor—the drop in investment in the country which we witnessed in the few years before the [first five-year] plan because of the considerable blows inflicted on the country's investment structures and because of the halt in many of the basic investments in the country, has started to move upwards during the first three years of the plan, and on the basis of the encouraging policies that have been adopted by the government, the volume of investment has realized considerable growth, so much so that in the years 1368-70 the average growth in investment was 12.6 percent. This is an extremely satisfactory rate.

As far as private consumption expenditures and government assistance are concerned, some may say that these are due to lower consumption by the people. But this is not so, because consumption has increased. During the first three years of the plan, private consumption had an average growth of 9.5 percent and this is more than double the growth envisaged in the plan. The growth in private consumption in recent years shows that the government has been able, by preserving its strong inclination toward investment, also to preserve the stable process of public consumption. The preservation of this process has been possible during recent years thanks to the existence of a considerable amount of assistance transferred by the government.

During the years 1368-70, one of the fields on which the government focused attention was the offering of an extensive volume of social welfare during the process of economic change. For this reason, each year a considerable amount of the general budget has been allocated to ensure basic goods, fuel, and health and social insurance to the society and in 1370 a total of 21 percent of the general budget was allocated as the government's transfer for ensuring welfare insurance.

We are quoting figures from 1370 because the figures for 1371 are not yet final. If we had these final figures for 1371, we would be able to present a much better picture. However, we still have a few months to go before the final figures are published.

The per capita subsidies which were allocated from the general budget during this period were marked by considerable growth. Per capita subsidies, which were 18,000 rials a year in 1367, have increased to 45,000 rials in 1370. You can see that one of the things that opponents generally say is that subsidies have been removed, the vulnerable strata did not have a high rate of consumption, and that investments were made. But per capita subsidies have increased from 18,000 rials to 45,000 rials in 1370 and will be even greater this year.

This comes when a considerable part of the government's assistance for water, electricity, bread, fuel, and so forth is extended covertly and not overtly reflected in the general budget. For example, during the current year the per capita annual assistance for bread has been 20,000 rials and the per capita annual assistance for fuel has been 167,000 rials. No one takes into consideration the fact that these figures are being taken from the general budget.

The financial situation of the government budget: As one of the government's basic objectives that has been pursued during the recent years and which will be pursued in the coming years, we can refer to the reformation of the government's financial situation. This reform should be considered from two basic perspectives. The first is the rectification of the government's income structure, and

in this field the government's attention has focused on increasing domestic revenue and on reducing the general budget's reliance on revenue stemming from oil exports. On the basis of this policy, revenue from taxes, which until before 1367 faced a drastic drop, realized a 41 percent increase in 1367-70 and its share of the gross national product increased from 4.3 percent in 1367 to 5.9 percent in 1370. In 1371, this figure is expected to reach 6.8 percent. The proportion here is important.

As you can see, with the reform in the budget structure in 1372, the proportion of tax revenue to the total revenue of the general budget has reached its actual figure. This proportion, which was achieved because of the reform in the computation of oil revenue, shows the extent of general efforts required to achieve a reduction in reliance on oil revenue. I hope that during the second plan, we can achieve favorable proportions in this field with the adoption of favorable policies.

The second perspective is the reform in the structure of the government's expenditures. One of the government's basic problems during the years before 1368 was the huge increase in the budget deficit. However, we can describe the 1367-70 era as a turning point in the compilation of a budget after the revolution. In this era, thanks to the efforts of the government, the government's revenues and expenditures were coordinated with the objectives envisaged in the first five-year plan and were brought closer and made to coordinate with the annual figures of the budget. Also, with the considerable increase in revenue, the government's budget deficit drastically dropped, so much so that the budget deficit in the general budget in 1370 dropped to 14.6 percent. You can recall that in 1367 we had a 51-percent-plus budget deficit. It has dropped from 51 to 14 percent this year. This figure is expected to drop to less than 9 percent in 1371 and in the 1372 budget, the government will have no budget deficit, which will have dropped to zero.

As you can see, during the years of the government's plan the general budget always was presented to the Majles by envisaging loans. We should not underestimate this. On exactly the same day that we were compiling the plan, a large number of experts said that the figure we envisaged in the plan was a hope-inspiring and not an actual figure. But we saw how this figure was achieved. This is not imaginary. When you look at the revenues in this year's budget, you will see that all of them are actual revenues. The same applies to expenditures. This is our situation, and actually this budget reflects the fact that our expenditures and revenues are now being balanced for 1372.

Among the other successes that were scored during recent years was reforming the share of development expenditures in the general budget. This share, which during the years before 1367 was constantly dropping, changed so much in 1368-70 that the share of development credits in the general expenditures of the budget has increased, while the share of current credits has decreased. Development credits in the total expenditures have increased from 19.4 percent in 1367 to 31.2 percent in 1370. This is an extremely good increase. Of course, we are not satisfied with this, and this figure should increase even more.

Currently more than 1,000 national development projects are being implemented throughout the country. This is the result that the increase in the development budget has yielded. These projects primarily concern higher education and research, water resources, roads and transportation, oil, technical and vocational training, mining, agriculture, natural resources, industries, and electricity. The projects in this field numberwise amount to 78 percent of all national projects, and creditwise make up about 70 percent of the general development budget. These fields to which I have referred are fields that truly will develop the country, and 70 percent of the development budget is spent here—that is, in small and consumer projects.

Among our good activities, we can refer to the reform in the banking system and to our financial and credit policies. The country's financial and credit policies also have faced major changes in recent years. These changes have led to an increase in the efficiency of banks and to increased use of suitable monetary means. The interest given to investment savings increased in order to encourage increased savings and especially long-term savings and in order to grant the necessary resources for investment. During the current year, the growth in the savings of the nongovernmental sector in the banks was 27.6 percent. During the same period, long-term savings increased by 31 percent. Long-term savings are important since they can be counted on for planning.

During recent years, with the abrogation of the policy of setting a credit ceiling, by lifting the obligation of commercial banks to purchase new bonds, and by determining a specific outline for the banks in extending credit facilities among the various sectors, the banks have been granted more freedom of activity in extending credit facilities and in determining the interest rate for savings. This has led to an average growth of more than 35 percent in the facilities extended by the banks to the nongovernment sector in 1369-70.

Major attention during recent years in extending credit facilities gradually has shifted to the benefit of production sectors; and this is an extremely noteworthy point since at the end of Shahrivar 1371 [month ending 22 September 1992], about 79 percent of the bank's credit facilities was allocated to production sectors. This is where the ground for improving the country's economy lies.

Among the important developments in the country's monetary system during the recent years is the change in the citizens' share of the cash flow. In 1370, the cash flow changed so much that the currency and coins in the hands of people, which was 17.9 percent by the end of 1369, dropped to 16 percent by the end of 1370. This figure in Shahrivar this year dropped to 13.5 percent. This shows the general attention paid to new monetary

means and the growth in general trust in the country's banking system. Money was in the hands of the people in a bad way in the past. It was always a source of corruption. But today this amount is deposited in banks.

Exports and imports: Moving in the direction of a single rate for foreign exchange has had a considerable impact on setting the country's economic wheels into motion. The government firmly believes that with the introduction of a single rate for foreign exchange—and with the cooperation of the esteemed Majles in 1372, an important step toward this will be taken—many of the disorders in the country's economy can be removed and the grounds for work and production in the country can be created and expanded.

During the past three years, during which the government has been taking effective steps in this direction, noteworthy successes fortunately have been scored as far as changing the composition of the country's imports and exports is concerned. During these years, the part played by non-oil exports in the country's foreign exchange revenue, which always was less than 5 percent in the years before the revolution and which also had dropped drastically in the years before 1367, increased so much that on the basis of official reports, this part increased to 8 percent in 1369 and to 16 percent in 1370.

Among the other important points as far as non-oil exports are concerned is the change in the composition of these exports. During recent years, industrial products manufactured at home have been able to find their way into world markets. For example, the opening of credit accounts for exporting industrial products under the protection of the Heavy Industries Ministry, which was only a total of $4 million in 1364-67, increased to $120 million in 1370. During the first eight months of the current year, this figure reached more than $511 million. As I said above, we also had 390,000 tonnes of steel exports.

This development in the country's industries has enabled us to export some industries that were importers until 1367. For example, in the petrochemical industries, we have been able to export 1.8 million tonnes of goods worth $194 million. We hope that in the coming years we can score more successes in our strategy of replacing imports with increasing exports.

As for imports, the Islamic Republic of Iran focused its efforts on fulfilling the strategy envisaged in the first plan. Due to the economic sectors' great need to reconstruct their destroyed infrastructures, the volume of imports increased in the initial years of the plan. This led to an increase in the country's commitments. However, due to government planning and the results of many steps taken during the current year and in coming years, a large part of the country's commitments will decrease. This issue used to be a source of concern to many but has now begun to decrease. I hope that with the cooperation of the esteemed Majles, we can act in such a way as to take effective steps to limit foreign exchange expenditures. You will see in this year's budget the great steps we have taken to decrease commitments and understand how the situation will be better next year.

Now, after having given this picture of the country's recent economic development, I will list the framework and general observations on the 1372 general budget, as well as the special characteristics of the budget for the various sectors for the information of the esteemed deputies.

The 1372 budget, Islamic Iran's last budget of the first development plan, has been compiled by taking into view the need to continue the process of economic growth. It has three basic characteristics.

The budget's first characteristic is that borrowing from the banking system to overcome the budget deficit has reached zero for the first time in 25 years, as envisaged in the first five-year plan. We should preserve this prideful figure and rely on it. It has been 25 years since our budget has not had a deficit. Only four years after the strange war, we have been able to bring this figure down to zero. This achievement should not be underestimated and should be considered as a truly great and worthy achievement envisaged in the first plan. The people can be further encouraged to exert more efforts. This fact can be considered a turning point in the nation's monetary activities.

The second characteristic is that following the government's decision to introduce a single foreign exchange rate, the foreign exchange quota system in force the last seven years has stopped and the figures stated in next year's budget bill are computed on the basis of the foreign exchange rate that will be determined on the basis of supply and demand. Of course, with the coordination of the esteemed Majles, the foreign exchange resources needed for defense, basic goods, medicine, and oil products will be computed on the basis of the current year rate. In our consultations with the Majles, we decided that we should allocate a government foreign exchange budget for these four fields—even though this was not the government's initial view. However, we accepted the concern voiced by our friends in the Majles and decided not to hurry. Now it is up to you, gentlemen. You will have to discuss this issue; we will accept whatever decision you adopt.

This is very important. Yesterday at the Supreme Economic Council we came across a very interesting point. We were discussing poisons. As you know, we import raw materials and manufacture poisons here. The discussion was whether this has any value. The consumers said that no, it does not have great added value. For example, they said: We buy a liter of a poison for, say, $4, or less than $4—for example, $3.6—from abroad. They tell us to buy 5 liters or 1 gallon here for $20-$21. Therefore, there is no difference; in some cases it is even more expensive.

We were surprised initially. But when we studied the matter, we saw that they had computed the foreign exchange at its cheap rate: 300 rials. What was happening was that they were saying: Either buy five liters of this product from us for 6,600 rials or for $21. We should, however, take the 6,600 rials as a starting point. That is, 5 liters costs 6,600 rials or $16. This secret issue lies in all our industries that deal with foreign and domestic markets. Beginning next year, however, instead of buying the poison from abroad for $4 a liter, the Agriculture Ministry will buy it at home for 1,200 rials a liter. This will be to the ministry's benefit as well, as we have given it rials and it will not have to exchange rials for dollars.

The same notion applies to projects and many other issues. We all basically knew this. When we add up all the individual cases at the end of next year, we will see how much attention will have been paid to domestic industries and how much of our foreign exchange will have been economized and not wasted. It is not very easy to cite these figures now. This is an extremely large job because we have similar examples in all fields.

The third characteristic of the 1372 budget is the efforts to make the budget as straightforward as possible. Some of government expenditures that used to receive allocations by various methods outside the framework of the budget have been reflected within the framework of the general budget. For example, we can mention the difference between the basic goods in the current budget and the investment expenditures of the National Iranian Oil Company and the National Iranian Gas Company as far as development budgets are concerned.

The country's general budget in 1372, with a figure of 54,179.7 billion rials, shows 87.4 percent growth in comparison to the 1371 budget. I will repeat this so that it is better understood: The country's general budget in 1372, which amounts to 54,179.7 billion rials, shows 87.4 percent growth in comparison to the 1371 budget.

I will now break down this figure into several sectors. Some 25,425.8 billion rials of budget credits have been allocated to the government's general budget, an increase of 104 percent in comparison to the current budget. Some 1,712.8 billion rials of the general budget will come from appropriated incomes. The budget of government companies, of government-affiliated profit-making institutions, and of banks will be 34,731.9 billion rials, a 93-percent increase in comparison to 1371. Of this amount, 30,460 [as heard] billion rials is allocated to government companies; 933.5 billion rials to government-affiliated profit-making institutions; and 3,438.4 billion rials to banks.

Now for the income and resources of this big budget. The income of the budget bill in 1372 has been estimated at 23,538.5 billion rials. The remainder will come from appropriated income as mentioned above. In comparison to the figure approved in 1371, this constitutes a 120.6-percent increase. Twenty-three percent of this figure will come from taxes; 67.2 percent from oil income; and 9.8 percent from other sources. As you can see, with the single foreign exchange rate, the actual share of income has been clarified and favorable grounds for future programs have been paved.

Another point is that 1272 is important because it is the year in which policies for the second plan will be compiled. In 1372, income from taxes in view of the measures envisaged in the framework of the first plan have been estimated at 5,419.7 billion rials, 50 percent higher than the current year. This is one of the important indicators we should always take into consideration.

Therefore, the ratio of tax incomes to the gross national product [as heard], which has been increasing since 1368, will reach 8.2 percent in 1372. This is almost the objective envisaged in the first plan and is one of the examples of the success of the implementation of the plan.

The increase in tax income in 1372 is mainly due to the increase in income tax and import taxes, and the improvement of the country's economic situation. The expansion of production and commercial activities will have an impact on this income.

In the past years, it has been proven that our income from taxes has always been more than the figure envisaged by the budget. We hope that this year the situation will improve as well; however, we have been cautious and have cited a logical figure in the budget.

As far as calculating oil income, while emphasizing the need for favorable use of production and export capacities, developments in the world market have been taken into consideration.

As for the government's other sources of income, which mainly stem from the government's production and services, a 20.4-percent increase has been envisaged and is expected to be achieved due to the mechanisms envisaged in the framework of the first plan, in the addenda of next year's budget, and in the supplementary bill on the law pertaining to the collection of some of the government's income and its use.

I will explain our expenditures. Running expenses in the 1372 budget bill have been estimated at 13,903.4 billion rials, about 85.3 percent more than in the 1371 budget. Some may immediately say that the increase is because of the single system for foreign exchange rates that will be introduced. That is untrue because this figure has been calculated without taking into consideration the increase from the foreign exchange rate and from some other new items. The growth in running expenses next year in comparison to 1371 is about 21 percent if we do not take those elements into consideration. If we to take them into consideration, however, the growth would be 85 percent. Of course, we can see that this is acceptable growth in comparison to our development.

One of the major things taken into consideration when compiling next year's budget was the allocation of credits to compensate for the impact of the drop in purchasing power of government institutions due to the single foreign exchange rate. In addition, we want to prevent an increase in the price of basic goods. While including the necessary allocations to implement the law on a coordinated wage system, we have also taken into consideration the repayment of money owed to employees. You know that in 1370, we did not pay part of the money owed to employees. We have taken this into consideration this year. The debts owed to them in 1370 amount to 1,835 billion rials, which is payment for the difference in the price of basic goods, including wheat, rice, ghee, sugar, meat, and cheese. In addition, 1,423.4 billion rials has been envisaged as payment for the difference in the foreign exchange rate pertaining to the press, the pilgrims' quota, the printing of textbooks, imports, the import of medical equipment, student scholarships, air companies, and the expenditures of other executive institutions. In fields where there was concern that the change in the foreign exchange rate would mean prices hikes and new problems, we have envisaged the rials necessary to compensate for changes in the foreign exchange rate. These are the two large figures I just referred to and figures which increase the expenditures in our current budget.

Within the framework of the 1372 budget, losses incurred by regional water companies have been fully ensured so that the gentlemen will not worry that water rates will increase. We have also envisaged the necessary credits to repay part of the demands of the Social Insurance Organization from the government and the payment of the workers' pending benefits. The benefits, social insurance, and debts owed to our employees are all envisaged in next year's budget. These are additional expenditures to the expenditures the current budget naturally called for. This is another positive point in our budget.

Among the significant characteristics of the proposed budget, we can refer to the special attention paid to cultural issues and to furnishing the spiritual needs of society, especially of the young generation. To pressure the government to change funding allocations, many unrelated interviews and remarks have been made recently that not much attention is being paid to culture or education. With the figures that have been allocated, however, you can see how the government has taken these fields into consideration and how, unfortunately, unjust some newspapers and some of the gentlemen have been on the issue.

To safeguard the country's Islamic and cultural aspirations and the revolution's main assets, we have to keep, in current conditions, an effective and suitable cultural presence going considering the extensive number of activities and programs the enemies of Islam carry out against our Islamic and revolutionary values and the progress of technology and technical means. This is why it is necessary for us to begin extensive efforts to create a variety of cultural programs, to publish books, and to produce films. This is why next year's budget envisages support for cultural figures and authors, assistance to manufacturers of healthy and useful cultural products, and ways to encourage popular forces and the nongovernmental sector to partake in cultural activities.

Another important point that the government has taken into consideration in the 1372 general budget is the extension of further protection to the vulnerable masses of society. The government is preparing a comprehensive plan which will, after studies are completed, be presented as a bill to the esteemed Majles.

To protect the vulnerable strata, credits allocated to the pertinent organizations in the 1372 budget have increased from 704.4 billion rials in the current year to 1,342.2 billion rials, a 90-percent increase. The major part of this is devoted to an increase in pensions. This is in addition to the subsidies the figures of which I cited previously. With the allocation, some 1,581,000 families comprising 6.3 million people will be covered this year. Each family will receive 80 percent of the minimum wages and benefits of the employed.

If we present these figures to the people correctly and highlight them, we will see how much the logic is worth of those who want to create problems by saying that no attention is paid to the vulnerable strata.

Each family will receive 80 percent of the minimum wages and benefits of the employed. Thus, in 1372 the number of people covered by the scheme has increased by 24 percent; the amount of pensions paid to the people covered by the scheme will be about double the amount in 1371. Their numbers have increased by 24 percent and their income has "doubled."

In continuation of the basic fields as far as the current year's expenditures are concerned, social sectors such as public education, vocational and technical training, higher education, culture and the arts, health and hygiene, and social insurance and welfare will pay a major part in the increase in current expenses. This is exactly contrary to what is being said: that more attention is being paid to economic problems and that these fields are not receiving the necessary attention.

The current expenditure for these fields in 1372 total 6,342 billion rials. The net percentage—after deducting the impact from the change in the foreign exchange rate and the rectifications from the implementation of the law on coordinated wages—is about 46 percent of the total current expenditures. This shows more than a 47-percent increase in comparison to 1371.

We have said that our current expenditures have grown by 21 percent. However, the allocations to these fields have increased 47 percent. This is an ambitious figure. All the people need to know is that they are not affected by poisonous inculcations. This increase is more than double the average growth of the total current expenditures next year.

In addition, problems in the judiciary sector and the preservation of public order and the country's domestic security have received special attention, with expenditures increasing by 67 to 52 percent, respectively.

The ratio between running expenses and the government's total expenses in 1372 is about 59 percent. Please regard this ratio carefully; a glance at the figures for 1369 and 1371 shows that considerable improvement has been made in the composition of running and development expenditures. This ratio is one of the budget's important points.

I will now explain development expenditures. Development credits in 1372 have been estimated at 9,809.6 billion rials, a 168-percent increase in comparison to the 1371 budget. You recall how in the current budget we said that we had 98 percent growth. We are envisaging 148 percent [as heard] growth here. Thus, the ratio of development expenditures to the total credits of the government's general budget will be 41 percent, the highest level in the past 27 years. I would like to repeat this: The ratio of development budgets and current budgets has not been this high in 27 years. This is the best example of the past 27 years of history, even during the years of the past regime, when there was so much foreign exchange income and they did not know how to allocate their foreign exchange budgets. Thus the ratio of development expenditures to total credits of the government's general budget will reach 41 percent, the highest level in 27 years.

From these credits various projects will be completed next year. Nineteen important projects with credits estimated at 1,080 billion rials have been completed and will become operational. Once these projects become operational, we will immediately see a leap in our gross national product. In addition, the major parts of eight other important projects will be completed.

The major projects that will become operational next year are: the Arak petrochemical plant; Refinery No. 7 of Arak; the Sayeh and Pishin dams; the Abadeh and Qa'en cement plants; the Hamadan and Goshtad grain elevators; a complex for the manufacturing raw materials for detergents; and the Kerman tire manufacturing plant.

In explaining the government's development credits in 1372, the major inclination has been to ensure the necessary investment resources to create the physical capacities for education, to develop the fields of water and soil, to equip infrastructure, and especially to meet telecommunications needs. Additionally, the major part of the capital needed by the oil, gas, and electricity companies will be ensured by next year's development budget.

By taking these priorities into consideration, we see a total of 45 percent growth in development credits in comparison to the figures in the 1371 budget. This is without taking into consideration the compensations paid because of the difference in the foreign exchange rate. The fields of education, vocational and technical training, higher education, water resources, electricity, gas, and roads and transportation are given priority. The total amount of allocations to these fields in the general development allocations amounted to 37 percent in 1371. This percentage will increase to 54 percent in 1372.

Provincial development budgets: One thing on which the deputies focus great attention—and they are right and we should cooperate with them here—is that more attention should be paid to provincial development budgets, which are used with the presence of provincial directors on the scene, which has more impact on activities. The provincial development budget in 1372 is better than in past years. Of course, we have improved this process every year, and we continued the process this year too. These budgets have adopted a more suitable form and while including a larger part of regional needs, they mainly lean toward creating more balance in various areas and granting benefits to the country's deprived and less developed areas.

Next year the country's provincial development budget has been estimated at 1,296 billion rials, a 78-percent increase in comparison to the previous year's figure. The main inclination in the allocation of these credits has been to look for ways to overcome education, health, and hygiene needs; to overcome infrastructure problems, such as the construction of roads; to provide electricity and potable water; and to improve production affairs, such as farming and water resources.

In addition to these credits, special allocations have been included in the budget's various addenda for the implementation of development projects in the provinces. This has increased the total volume of provincial allocations considerably.

Another important characteristic in next year's development budget is the continuation of special attention to deprived and lesser-developed areas. This is one of our serious policies in the plan that is being continued this year. We think we should continue this process until we do not have any more deprived areas.

To fulfill the objectives in Addendum Five of the first five-year plan, this inclination can be seen to explain the provincial development budgets of 1372. The country's deprived areas have received favorable credits. In the 1372 budget bill, 259 billion rials of special credits has been allocated in Section Six of the bill under the title: Special Credits for the Deprived Areas for Overcoming Deprivations and for Narrowing the Distance Between These Areas and the Country's Rich Areas. This credit is more than 54 percent more that last year. The six sections of development in the 1371 budget have been increased to 13 in the 1372 budget. These sections mainly concern the implementation of infrastructure projects that will create jobs in rural areas.

Among the other special characteristics of the 1372 budget is the inclusion of credits for the completion of

semi-completed reconstruction projects in the earthquake-stricken areas in Gilan and Zanjan Provinces. Fifty billion rials have been envisaged for this project, 41 billion rials of which will pertain to provincial projects and 9 billion rials to national projects.

Among the other major points in the 1372 budget bill is the special attention paid to reconstruction of war-stricken areas and to creating the necessary conditions for our war refugees to return to their homes. To accelerate the implementation of reconstruction projects, for the first time reconstruction credits have been decentralized and divided among the war-stricken provinces in the budget bill.

Investment in reconstruction amounts to 600 billion rials, of which 320 billion will be used to implement provincial projects. Some 280 billion rials will be used to pay compensation for the war. This is more than 71 percent in comparison to the credits allocated last year and with the implementation of this budget, we envisage about half a million more of our war-stricken compatriots to return to their homes.

There are other points I would like to state for your information as far as next year's budget is concerned. We in the government have approved a decision concerning the war-stricken people who have not yet returned to their homes and who have not yet received compensation. We have decided to begin compensation payments to all of them this year. There are about 100,000 cases involving houses and shops and we should give an average of about 8 million rials to each family. Some will receive more and some will receive less. This is the total of the compensation we want to give to each unit. We have said that all of them should open a bank account so that this money can be deposited there. The Housing Foundation or another organization will assure that this money is used for development activities and for returning to their areas. This is so that these people will not wait for us to allocate a budget and so that they can withdraw any amount they want from their account under supervision.

We have also calculated the other infrastructure reconstruction affairs that remain and believe that these can be completed in two years. They have said that if we allocate about 1.2 trillion rials these sectors will be completed within two years. Thus, we have included half of this amount in this budget, which we will give to the people as I explained. We will hand the projects to national and provincial organizations so that they can use this amount as a general budget. The Reconstruction Headquarters will supervise and the governor-generals and the provincial planning committees will carry out their duties. The process has become similar to the process used in the implementation of other plans but with more facilities.

The budget of state companies, government-affiliated profit-making organizations, and banks: Last year various steps were taken to improve the services offered by state companies. This year the policy of handing over state companies to the nongovernmental sector to attract the people's participation continued. In parallel with these steps, other state companies carried out activities in the atmosphere that was created aimed at improving their production quality and method to create the necessary conditions for their presence in world markets.

The resources and expenses of state companies, banks, and government-affiliated profit-making organizations has been estimated at 34,731.9 billion rials in 1372, 57.7 percent of the general budget. This is a 93-percent growth in comparison to the 1371 budget.

A noteworthy point we should not neglect is that when we list the figures in the development budget, we are generally referring to the figures pertaining to the share by the government. The numerous development activities carried out by state companies usually do not appear in these figures. When we include these figures in our comparison, however, we realize what great steps are being taken in the field of development.

For example, in our comparisons we tend to disregard the oil, gas, steel, telecommunications and other such companies that are allocating great sums, which are sometimes much larger than government budgets. It is projects such as these that increase our earnings.

In 1372 and within the framework of the objectives stated in the first five-year plan, state companies will invest 11,039 billion rials from their domestic resources, from facilities extended by the banking system, and from other resources. This is a 150-percent increase in comparison to 1371.

The taxes and profit shares of state companies in 1372 have been estimated at 616.9 billion and 129.9 billion rials, respectively, a 76- and 399-percent increase in comparison to last year's budget.

President Calls for Expansion of Shipping

LD1312171192 Tehran IRNA in English 1542 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 13, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani today called Iran's shipping industry as "strategic", in view of the country's geographical location and the use of Iranian soil as an outlet to the world for the landlocked Central Asian Republics.

Addressing a ceremony on the 25th anniversary of the establishment of Iran's shipping company, he described it as one of the thriving companies in the country which, with the assistance of the government can compete better with other international shipping companies.

He said that during the Iraqi war (1980-1988) when most international companies had kept distance from Iran, the shipping company played a "lifeline" role for the country "sensitive and extraordinary."

Today also it plays a vital role in Iran's economic development, said the president, noting that according to the latest figures, the shipping company transported 10 million tons of goods to the country in addition to exporting merchandise abroad.

Referring to the Central Asian states' need to transit their goods to and from international markets via Iran, he called for further expansion of the country's shipping industry.

Rafsanjani said that one of the problems of the African countries was lack of shipping links with Iran.

Their goods are shipped to Europe at lower rates and then sent to Iran with higher freight charges, he said, expressing hope that with the expansion of Iran's shipping activities, this issue can be solved.

German Intelligence Probes Iranian Nuclear Program

AU0712102792 Hamburg WELT AM SONNTAG in German 6 Dec 92 p 26

[Report by Michael J. Inacker]

[Text] Hamburg—Concerns in the West about an "Islamic" atom bomb are increasing. German intelligence service information obtained by DIE WELT indicates that a number of facilities are currently being built in Iran that will allow the country to develop and produce an Iranian nuclear weapon.

Information from the Federal Intelligence Service (BND) summarized by the Bundeswehr Office of Military Intelligence in a confidential paper in September notes that Iran has "energetically worked at setting up nuclear research facilities" since 1983. The objective is "to have a good command of the entire nuclear fuel cycle and, thus, the ability to produce nuclear warheads."

German intelligence analysis indicates that the "facilities that have been built so far and the equipment and materials procured"—above all from the PRC but also from some European countries—"are indispensable for producing nuclear weapons." The facts "cannot leave any doubt about Iran's intention to produce nuclear weapons."

Research is currently being done in five centers, the largest of which is the Esfahan nuclear research center. The PRC, in particular, has been involved in the expansion of this center since 1985. Its tasks include reactor technology, the nuclear fuel cycle, uranium enrichment, and uranium reprocessing. The BND paper says that Esfahan will "in the future be Iran's most significant nuclear research facility." It must be assumed that "under the cloak of peaceful nuclear research, militarily oriented work is also carried out in this intricate large complex."

The same report indicates that Iran also intends to build two nuclear power plants. In Gorgan, on the Caspian Sea, a power plant with two reactors of the most modern Russian VVER 440 type will be set up in cooperation with the CIS. CIS experts reportedly have already examined the site. Even though, according to Western information, geologists would prefer to set up the plant elsewhere "because of the danger of earthquakes there," Iran insists on the proximity to the Islamic republics of the CIS.

The second power plant will be built in Darkhovin, in southwestern Iran, with Chinese help. Pakistan also intends to have the Chinese build a power plant of the same type. Western reports indicate that Iran has already agreed on "nuclear cooperation" with Pakistan, which is a nuclear threshold country.

It is true that "owing to their technical construction," the nuclear power plants would not be suitable for the production of weapons-grade plutonium. However, as civilian nuclear facilities they can be "used as an alibi for other nuclear technical activities that in reality serve military purposes."

The German intelligence services see this alibi function confirmed by the fact that Iran intends to cover up its military nuclear ambitions by means of "disinformation, insufficient reports, too brief inspection periods, and the refusal to give access to certain buildings" for inspections by the International Atomic Energy Organization.

In view of the continuing proliferation of mass destruction weapons, Fritz Wittmann (Christian Social Union), chairman of the Bundestag Defense Committee, demanded that the Federal Government finally present a conclusive foreign and security policy concept.

Oil Exploration Continues in Caspian Sea

LD1612131192 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Excerpts] This week's report is on the introduction of the project for the exploration of oil and gas in the Caspian Sea:

Before the [1979] revolution, due to the political situation and the nonexistence of suitable relations with the former Soviet government, there was no possibility of exploration in the Caspian Sea. Despite the fact that former Soviet experts at the time had discovered large oil fields in the northern parts of the Caspian Sea and had brought them to the stage of exploration, there was no important effort for the exploration of oil in the southern section by the Iranian Government of the time.

After the Islamic revolution and the removal of these obstacles, effective steps were taken in the southern sections of the Caspian Sea. [passage omitted]

Oil experts of the former Soviet Union first started exploration in the Caspian Sea 50 years ago and successfully discovered many oil fields in the northern sections

of the Sea. Today, oil exploitation continues by the present Government of Azarbaijan.

Reza Majedi, who has a master's degree in geology and management, is the head of the exploration project in the Caspian Sea. We have asked him to give you, dear listeners of the "Special Project" program, a brief history of exploration in the southern section of the Caspian Sea.

[Begin recording] [Majedi] Taking into account the exploitation of oil in the northern section of the Caspian Sea and with regard to the geological conditions, Iranian oil experts believed that oil could exist in the southern section of the sea. With this idea in mind, seismic exploration started in the Caspian Sea in 1937 over an area of 15,000 kms. Unfortunately this operation did not continue and exploration in the Caspian Sea stopped.

Fortunately, in 1986 the Ministry of Oil set up a project for the exploration and drilling of oil in the Caspian Sea. The project reviewed and revised the existing data and chose a suitable site for drilling the first exploratory well in the Caspian Sea.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Majedi, where was this?

[Majedi] This was northeast of Anzali port, 30 km out to sea. [passage omitted] The drilling of the first exploratory well in the Caspian Sea then started in August 1989. [end recording]

Increasing Resources for Research Urged

NC1612105392 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Commentary prepared by the Central News Unit's Research Group]

[Text] In the name of God. The deputy minister of culture and higher education for research affairs has said that the budget allocated to research in the second five-year economic, social, and cultural development plan is insufficient and that this allocation does not conform with the objectives envisaged in the plan.

Research and the amounts allocated to research in a society show the significance a country attaches to its development and progress in the various scientific, social, political, and economic fields. Undoubtedly, without the allocation of the funds needed for research one cannot expect to achieve favorable progress and development in the various fields. This becomes clearer when we look at facts and figures in the industrial countries.

Figures show that in the industrial countries there is a direct correlation between the volume of investments and technological progress. For example, in 1980 North Korea allocated about .6 percent of its gross national product to research. In 1986 this figure tripled and this country allocated 1.8 percent of its GNP for research. Now North Korea is considered one of Asia's developed countries.

Basically speaking, this figure fluctuates between 2 to 4 percent, according to circumstances in the industrial countries. In the Third World countries, however, this figure is less than one percent.

In our country, too, despite the necessary forecasts, only about .3 percent of the GNP has been earmarked for research while on the basis of the government's general policies, upgrading higher education is currently one of our primary plans.

According to experts of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, universities are facing funding shortages in research, but higher education is of special significance in view of the role it plays in training an expert labor force. Clear it is impossible to train experts without allocating the necessary educational and research budgets.

Paying attention to this issue is of domestic importance while it also has its foreign perspectives. Some Iranian experts are living abroad and the country is unable to use them just because of the shortage of research and financial facilities at home.

Our country is rich as far as manpower and material resources are concerned and using these assets requires planning, attention to needs, and creating the necessary grounds. Strengthening university forces and scientific research is the key to a country's progress; this is within our reach.

Khamenei Appointed to Cultural Revolution Council

LD1112164892 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 11 Dec 92

[Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamenei'i, the guardian of the cause of Muslims, issued a decree appointing Hojjat ol-Eslam val-ensmin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni a member of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution.

Pakistani Communication Minister Visits

Meets Velayati

LD1212154492 Tehran IRNA in English 1359 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 12, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati said here Saturday that expansion of road and railway links between Iran and Pakistan would strengthen bilateral relations.

Velayati in a meeting with Pakistani Minister of State for Communications Azam Khan Hoti added that membership of the Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union

in the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) has added to the importance of communications.

Hoti said conditions are appropriate for Tehran-Islamabad cooperation in the area of communication.

Exchange of experts and technical facilities as well as ventures of the Central Asian republics on expansion of communication relations, were among other topics discussed in the meeting.

Hoti is currently visiting Iran at the invitation of Road and Transport Minister Mohammad Ja'afri-Kia.

Agreement Signed

LD1212175592 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] A memorandum of understanding in the fields of shipping, road-building, laying railways, and the expansion of communications cooperation was signed between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan tonight.

According to the memorandum of understanding the two countries have also agreed to add 60 more communication channels to the existing 77.

Pakistan's Defense Minister Meets Reza'i, Velayati

LD1512035892 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Pakistan's defense minister, currently visiting our country, met today with Major General Mohsen Reza'i, commander in chief of the Islamic revolution guards corps. In the course of this meeting, issues of mutual interest were discussed.

The defense minister of Pakistan also met Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati today.

Cabinet Approves Cooperation Agreement With Qatar

LD1312203092 Tehran IRNA in English 1830 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 13, IRNA—The cabinet tonight approved the bill on cultural, scientific and educational cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Qatar.

The cabinet also took some other decisions on the proposals of the executive bodies of the government.

Velayati Sends Message to Omani Counterpart

LD1312144492 Tehran IRNA in English 1320 GMT 13 Dec 92

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 13, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in a message to his Omani counterpart Yusuf Bin-'Alawi bin-Abdullah called for coordinated efforts of the Islamic countries to face global plots against Islam.

The message was conveyed to Bin-Abdullah by Iranian ambassador to Muscat Mohammad 'Arab in a meeting in the Omani capital Saturday.

Referring to Iran's important role in maintaining regional peace as well as Tehran-Muscat good relations, Abdullah said his country is ready for any cooperation and coordination at international scenes.

Talks With Kuwaiti Delegation on Transport Agreements

LD1512210392 Tehran IRNA in English 1745 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 15, IRNA—The Kuwaiti delegation to Tehran headed by Deputy Minister of Communications for Transportation Affairs, Abdolrahim al-Mashaweri al-Yaqut, today reviewed transportation topics with Iranian Roads and Transport Minister Mohammad Ja'afri-Kia.

The Kuwaiti official later conferred with the managing director of Iran's ports and shipping organization Mohammad Madad on a proposed maritime agreement between Iran and Kuwait.

The topics in their talks included the ways and means for unifying registration of small boats that berth at the ports of the two countries.

The two officials also reviewed proposed regulations for protection of the maritime environment and issuance of navigational documents.

The Kuwaiti delegation arrived here Monday.

Editorial Urges Closer Ties With Saudi Arabia

NC1112165492 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 2 Dec 92 p 2

[Editorial: "Amiable and Fraternal Ties Are the Only Solution"]

[Text] The Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister, Sa'ud al-Faysal urged on Sunday [29 November] in Cairo for the establishment of relations based on reciprocal trust and respect between Iran on the one hand and Egypt and the Saudi Arabia on the other.

Taking part in a press conference at the end of a two-hour talk with Hosni Mubarak, Head of the Egyptian regime, the Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister remarked that both Egypt and the Saudi Arabia, realizing the significance of relations among neighboring countries, were hoping that their relations with Iran could be devoid of doubts and mistrust, and based on reciprocal reliance and respect.

Concerning the above statements it is first necessary to demarcate Iran's relations with the Saudi Arabia from her ties with Egypt.

Iran and the Saudi Arabia maintain diplomatic relations on the level of ambassaders, and it should be borne in mind that diplomatic ties between the two countries are especially important in view of the geopolitical conditions of the region, the powerful presence of both countries in OPEC, and the critical roles oil revenues perform in the economies of both countries.

Whereas none of these considerations apply to Iran's relations with Egypt, this should not be taken as meaning that relations with Egypt is considered insignificant for Iran. All the same it does not seem to be a correct classification to place Iran's relation with the Saudi Arabia in the same category with her relations with Egypt.

A short review of the crisis in the relations among the three countries, would convince Sa'ud al-Faysal that the crisis originated from Saudi Arabia at the Jeddah Conference in December with efforts to aggrandize the dispute between Iran and the UAE [United Arab Emirates]. The crisis was further deepened by similar efforts at the Cairo Conference of the Arab League in which Egypt performed a decisive role. Thus it would only be fair to state that primary responsibility for the creation of tension and crisis in the relations between Iran and the other two countries rests with Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Impartial observers would readily concede that Iran never attempted to create tensions in its relations with the countries in the region, especially the Islamic nations.

Unfortunately, however, it has to be stated that the countries in the region tend to view any remark by Iran in a negative light. When the 6 + 2 scheme was conceived in Damascus, Iran expressed the opinion that this was not a wise decision, and that it could not guarantee or safeguard security in the region. But the remarks of the Iranian authorities on the scheme were misinterpreted by the countries in the region. However, in the course of time it has been demonstrated that the Iranian authorities had been in the right and that the scheme is indeed impracticable. Now the Egyptian Foreign Minister, 'Amr Musa evaluates the 6 + 2 scheme the same way Iranian authorities had done months ago.

During the occupation of Kuwait, Iran proved beyond any doubt that she is not pursuing opportunistic diplomacy. But unfortunately Iran's demonstration of goodwill has been responded to with measures by the countries in the region which only served to create tensions.

As it is, Tehran which had previously been forgiving of the obvious and undeniable enmities of these countries during the eight years of Iraq's aggression against Iran, and as in the past occasions bases its decisions on firm moral and cultural grounds, is prepared to forget past grievances, and maintain friendly and fraternal ties with the countries in the region.

Annual Trade With Azerbaijan To Reach $100 Million

LD1512215392 Tehran IRNA in English 1817 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Tabriz (East Azarbaijan Prov.), Dec. 15, IRNA—The value of annual trade this year between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan is likely to hit dlrs 100 million for the current calendar year which ends on March 20.

Governor General of Iran's East Azarbaijan province, 'Ali Abdul- Alizadeh, said here today that during the first half of the next calendar year (March 21-September 22 1993) the volume of the two countries' trade exchanges is expected to reach dlrs 200 million.

He said common markets on the Iran-Azerbaijan border were to start operation in Jolfa, Aslandouz, Khoda-Afarin and Bilehsavar shortly.

The Iranian official noted that the Islamic republic was concerned about the Muslim people of Azerbaijan Republic and had done as much as it could in their interest.

He added already a liberal amount of aid in kind by Iran had been offered to the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan. In addition Iran has also offered 60 mega watts of power to Nakhichevan.

Earlier, head of the delegation from the Republic of Azerbaijan, Afiyateddin Jalilov, who was participating in the inauguration of a new border post in Aslandouz between Iran and Azerbaijan, appreciated the efforts of the Islamic government and described it as a big stride for neutralizing the economic blockade of the republic and for supplying the people's daily provisions.

The opening of the border post in Aslandouz has also halved the length of the roadway to Nakhichevan which previously had to be made through the Iranian town of Astara by the Caspian Sea.

Aslandouz is 280 kilometer's northeast of here and according to the census conducted in 1990, it has a population of 30,000 mainly engaged in agricultural activity and animal husbandry.

Daily Oil Production Cut by 300,000 Barrels

LD1412184592 Tehran IRNA in English 1644 GMT 14 Dec 92

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 14, IRNA—Iran on Monday said that in compliance with an OPEC agreement last November it has cut its production by nearly 300,000 bpd [barrels per day] since early December.

In a statement issued here, Iran expressed hope that other members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries would take similar measure to reduce their output.

The statement said that in view of the current oil prices which indicate that the supply of crude oil is much more than its demand on international markets, Iran is ready for further cuts in its production providing that other members do so.

It expressed hope that the chairman of the OPEC would do all within his power to persuade OPEC members to stabilize oil markets.

Islamic Revolution Called 'Death Knell' for Cairo

NC1312210792 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 5 Dec 92 p 14

[Unattributed commentary: "Egypt, Awaiting Another Khalid Islambuli"]

[Excerpts] Eight of the 26 Egyptian Muslim combatants on trial were sentenced to death by the Supreme military tribunal on 3 December in the city of Alexandria. Of these eight persons, seven were tried and sentenced in absentia. [passage omitted]

The hasty trials of the eight Muslim combatants with only one of them present in the Supreme Military Tribunal in Alexandria manifests the fear and apprehension of the Egyptian regime with regard to the proliferating Islamic activities of the Muslim combatants and the regime's inability to arrest them. The individuals who were sentenced to death were wanted by the Cairo regime for over a year.

Obviously, the verdict to execute the Egyptian Muslims will not solve any of the plethora of problems facing the egocentric Egyptian Government. On the contrary, it will only multiply the problems of this regime in a society already replete with instability and tension, as this will make the Muslims strugglers of this country more determined to fight against the tyranny and oppression of the brutal Cairo regime.

The despotic Egyptian rulers should learn a lesson from the swift reaction of the people since less than four hours after the announcement of the verdict against the Muslim combatants, Asyut was transformed into a scene of armed combat against the ruling regime.

Egyptians are endowed with awareness and political acumen. Egypt has a pure and cultured nation for whom it is not difficult to distinguish between right and wrong, virtue and vice, or to recognize what constitutes service to treacherous elements. On the day when the fiery bullets of Khalid Islambuli rent the chest of the malicious Pharaoh of the time, meaning al-Sadat, the Egyptian people were thus able to affirm the strength of their convictions in sifting wrong from right and in chastising those who betrayed Islam and the Muslim people of Egypt.

Today, whenever any treacherous Egyptian official meets with an Israeli official, he feels that he will one day become the victim of the wrath and fury of the Egyptian Muslim nation. This fear can now be perceived in the president, who has been imposed on the Islamic society of Egypt.

The ruler of Cairo cannot divert Egyptian public opinion toward artificial crises in the Persian Gulf with propaganda attacks against the Islamic Republic of Iran and thus keep himself immune from the furious glances of the Egyptian people brimming with hatred.

The Muslim Egyptian people are well aware that there is no difference between one who seeks to effect a compromise between the Arab front and the bloodthirsty Israeli regime and one who travels to Israel in the same garb and shakes the filthy hands of the Zionists. For them, both are doomed to meet the same fate and obviously this is being reflected in Egyptian society.

The interpretation of the Islamic movement in Egypt today is that for such a cultured nation, the continuation of the policy of obsequiousness and treachery is intolerable. Today, more than ever before, the people of Egypt are hopefully awaiting the appearance of another Khalid Islambuli in the society.

The revolutionary execution of al-Sadat 10 years ago is testimony of the decisive and uncompromising stance of Islam and Muslims against such compromising elements who prefer to support the racist and despotic Zionists instead of upholding the Islamic interests of their own nation. Today, the Islamic revolution in the region has reached such a dynamic stage that it is sounding the death knell for every compromising element who proffers the hand of friendship toward the enemies of Islam and the Koran and who moves in the direction contrary to that of the Islamic umma'h. [passage omitted]

These are the facts that the Egyptian leaders should have realized better than all others and the recent events in Egypt are evidence of the growth of the Islamic sensitivities and leanings of the Muslim people of that country. It should be driven home to the rulers of Cairo that the determination of the Muslim nations cannot be fettered with arcane collusion, plots, treachery, and deceit. The honor, prestige, and nobility of a nation cannot be bartered away to strangers for the sake of protecting the diadems and thrones.

Power of Islam Said Greater Than Nuclear Weapons

NC1312180592 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 7 Dec 92 pp 1, 13

[Editorial: "An Energy More Explosive than 'Nuclear Power'"]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

Finally, the face behind all the anti-Iranian propaganda has emerged to some extent and the source of the propaganda regarding Islamic Iran's military strength, especially on Iranian experts' gaining access to nuclear technology, as well as its objectives, has appeared.

Western sources have reported that Yitzhaq Shamir, the former prime minister of the Zionist regime had formulated a plan to attack the nuclear installations of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which encountered Washington's opposition. This plan was scheduled to have been implemented prior to the Israeli elections. Washington had promised Israel that if its nonmilitary efforts to halt the nuclear project were ineffective, the United States, along with other Western countries, would assist Israel in attacking the nuclear installations of Iran and the Arab countries.

There are certain issues here that merit attention: First, how reliable is this report? Is it authentic or is it a worthless propaganda stunt? Regardless of what the answer to this question may be, it is essential that we know whether the West is going to use its base in the region—Israel—to keep the regional countries in a defensive state and to wrest the initiative from them.

It is certainly necessary, in view of such circumstances, that a clear response be given to such reports so that if their dissemination has a "testing aspect" the West and Israel should be assured what kind of response to expect from us in the event of such an occurrence.

It is not clear what reaction the Arabs would have to such an event. Naturally, they adopt a stance and declare their opinions when they realize an issue is serious. As for Iran, its stance is quite clear. Of course, our clear and official stance will be announced whenever officials consider it expedient. Even before an official announcement on such a report, it is possible to confidently predict what Iran's stance will be in this regard.

The first point is whether there is any nuclear weapon or not, and whether there is any motivation to obtain it. Iran has a clear stance on this and has declared it overtly. We are blessed with the proper military capability, manpower, and levers to defend our homeland, so naturally we do not have any motivation to obtain nuclear arms.

Of course, one cannot ignore the fact that nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, especially for generating electricity and for medical or other uses, is making great strides in the contemporary world and the scientific and specialized abilities of Iranian experts are very high. Therefore, it is necessary to attain scientific know-how and use industry and technology for peaceful nuclear purposes. [passage omitted]

On the instigation of the Zionists, the West, particularly the United States, is striving to keep Islamic Iran on the defensive and prevent it from using nuclear energy peacefully. Thus, it wishes to keep our elite experts in a state of technical backwardness in this new field of science and technology. [passage omitted]

We should make it clear to the criminal leaders of the Zionist regime that for the destruction of Israel, there is no need for nuclear energy or bombs. All will witness that the Israeli regime will be toppled by the powerful forces of Islam without even the smallest nuclear weapon, and the banner of the pride of Islam will be hoisted on the minarets of the Palestinian mosques and wherever else necessary.

Islam has generated a strength in the nature of the Muslim nations more powerful than any atomic bomb. It is the "concentrated" energy of the world of Islam, the evidence of which we perceive with our own eyes in every nook and corner of the region. We have attained the secrets of this strength, which were far more difficult to attain than any nuclear secret, and we have taught them to the tyrannized people of the world of Islam.

The method of obtaining this concentrated energy is part of the greater secrets of the Islamic revolution that dear Khomeyni taught all the heartbroken and deprived barefoot human beings who had lost everything. [passage omitted]

There is also a very clear reply for Israel when it is tempted to launch a lightning attack on Iran's nuclear installations. The slightest effort on the part of Tel Aviv in this direction, however successful it may be, will generate a massive and destructive tidal wave of attacks by selfless and martyrdom-seeking forces in the very heartland of the occupied land of Palestine and its most inaccessible regions.

The nuclear installations of the Zionists will be the very first target of these attacks and the enriched uranium that Israel has taken from the West will be taken as booty in the retaliatory attacks. Not only Israel, but this time its Western allies will also be definitely informed, so that they are gripped by fear and serious perturbation. The enemies of Islam are well aware that this is truly possible and it is not a propaganda bluff [preceding word in English]. Islamic Iran does not have an atomic bomb, but if it is necessary to carry out a retaliatory operation tomorrow, it will wrest the bomb from its enemies as booty, even if it has to review its own calculations.

Dailies React to German Statement on Rushdie

LD1512230092 Tehran IRNA in English 2050 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 15, IRNA—Two Iranian dailies today called for revision of ties with Germany, with "JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI" arguing if it is wise "to put all eggs in the basket of a single country", and the English language "TEHRAN TIMES" noting that political leaders in Bonn seem more eager for praises from

London and Washington than having cordial relations with a powerful Middle Eastern country.

The dailies were commenting on the abrupt announcement by the German parliament that any incident leading to the carrying out of the death verdict against Indian born British Apostate, Salman Rushdie, would have dire economic-political consequences for Iran.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, said Britain—which is sheltering the sentenced apostate from justice—was behind this new conspiracy, because it has nothing else to be proud of in today's fast developing world.

"The fact is while Germany and other European states are striving to surge ahead with their scientific and technological knowhow, the Britons are trying to cover up their bankrupt economy by resorting to such sordid means as the Rushdie affair.

"To attract cheap attention is one of the characteristics of the backward, and today London which lags far behind the fast-moving economic-industrial convoy of Europe, is desperately attempting to be in the news by raising up dirty propaganda fuss," said the article.

Both London and Washington, said JOMHURI, bitterly realize they have no share in Iran's brisk trade market, and therefore like two trapped crabs are trying in pull other's leg "to make them partake of their own unfortunate fate." [sentence as received]

However, it added, "as far as Iran was concerned it had made it clear that is was not in the interest of the Germans to set the bankrupt Britons as their example."

"No matter what Bonn would decide in this regard, decision-making circles in Iran should take such announcements seriously and should have second thought on Germany's share in Iran's bustling market," said the daily.

Rushdie, who authored the highly sacrilegious book "The Satanic Verses", was sentenced to death in accordance with divine laws by the father of the Islamic revolution, the late Imam Khomeyni, in February 1989, a day after his blasphemy shed Muslim blood in India and Pakistan.

All schools of Islamic jurisprudence state that an apostate born of Muslim parents should be executed for blaspheming the Koran and the person of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and that repentance in this particular case is a matter solely concerning divine grace in the hereafter depending on sincerity of intention involved.

Commenting on the surprising move of the German parliament in support of an avowed apostate, TEHRAN TIMES wrote that after the Persian Gulf crisis which drew the attention of the industrialized nations on the strategic significance of the Persian Gulf, each of the developed countries tried to find their allies in the region.

"The littoral countries on the southern Persian Gulf coasts were the traditional allies of the U.S. and England. France has extensive relations with Iraq, but after the deterioration of Baghdad's position, France tried to find new allies in the southern Persian Gulf," added the daily.

In the opinion of the daily, since Iran as the only country on the northern coasts of the Persian Gulf, could not have close relations with the U.S., England or France which had supported Iraq during its eight year aggression, Germany as an economically powerful nation could have been a suitable partner for Iran.

"But now it would seem that the political leaders in Bonn are beginning to think differently, and are more eager for praises from London and Washington than maintaining cordial relations with an ally in the Middle East," it thought.

The daily concluded by proposing that the bill for the resumption of cultural relations between Iran and Germany which was to be on the agenda of the Islamic Consultative Assembly in the coming month, "be put off for the time being. The unwholesome atmosphere which the German leaders have created against Iran, would seem to make any cultural cooperation impossible."

Former Afghan Militia Chief Arrested

LD1512211192 Tehran IRNA in English 1748 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] Mashhad (Khorasan), Dec. 15, IRNA—Afghan Communist Militia Leader and supporter of the former regime, Haj Gholamali Nabi-Berichi, better known as "Haj-Gholam", has been arrested on charges of murder, robbery, and rape, announced the investigator of the first branch of the Islamic Revolution Tribunal here today.

He told IRNA that, Haj-Gholam, backed by the now overthrown Najibullah regime, had assembled a gang of 200 armed bandits, and committed crimes on either side of the Iran-Afghan border.

Scores of complaints have so far been filed against him by both Iranian and Afghan nationals backed by documentary evidence, the investigator said, adding that Haj-Gholam has also confessed to the crimes.

According to the Iranian official, complaints include five cases of murder, one case of kidnapping and extortion of 20 million rials, stealing hundreds of heads of cattle as well as 10 tons of pistachio kernels worth dlrs 50,000.

He said Haj-Gholam had stolen a total of rials 1000 million, however, only rials 100 million, including 16,500 German marks, 15,000 U.S. dollars, 15 million Iranian rials, 500,000 Afghanis, some Pakistani rupees and a car were recovered from him.

Armed attacks against Iranian government centers such as the Dogharun customs in Taibad several years ago and the killing of 2 Iranian soldiers are among the charges against Haj-Gholam, said the investigator.

Haj-Gholam was arrested along with his brother, while trying to convert his loot into dollars and flee to Europe.

He had four wives, and murder of one of them is also included in his criminal file, which the investigator said would soon be handed over to the Islamic Revolutionary Tribunal.

Pakistan

Reaction to U.S., Bhutto's Claim on Nuclear Bombs

U.S. Senator Said 'Wrong'

BK0712100192 Islamabad THE NATION in English 7 Dec 92 p 12

[Text] Karachi—Defence Minister Ghaus Ali Shah has said that US Congressman Pressler was in the wrong about Pakistan possessing seven atomic bombs.

He said that Pakistan has been endeavouring to assure the West, particularly the USA, that its nuclear programme was for peaceful purposes as "we do not desire to possess or develop any weapon of mass destruction. "Pakistan is prepared to sign NPT [non-proliferation treaty] provided India does so and has proffered the five-nation proposal to keep South Asia a nuclear free zone, he asserted.

He was talking to THE NATION here on Sunday when he called on Mr Majid Nizami.

Syed Ghaus Ali Shah said: "Our position on Nuclear Programme is very clear and the level of our achievement is only for peaceful purpose. To a question, the Defence Minister said there were cordial relations between the government and the Army. The Army is a national institution, which strongly believes that democracy is the best political system for the country, he added. To another question, he said there was no proposal whatsoever to accord the Army a constitutional role in the national polity. When he was asked whether there was any chance of dialogues between the government and Opposition, the Defence Minister responded thast "negotiating" is always the best solution of the political issues and added that the government has always said that street demonstrations would solve nothing rather weaken and hinder the democratic process. The only way to solve the political issues is to sit together and discuss things amicably, he said. Continuing. He said that the Prime Minister wrote a letter to Opposition leader. Ms Benazir Bhutto but her reply was not positive and contained some unacceptable preconditions. He said the doors of the government are always open for the dialogue with the Opposition.

To another question, Syed Ghaus Ali Shah said that the PDA [Pakistan Democratic Alliance] long march had become the short march and was going to end very soon. When period of ongoing Army operation could be extended, the Defence Minister said this will be reviewed in January and the government will assess the "extent of success" of the operation and then decide. He, however, said that most of the decoits terrorists and other criminals have [robbers] been nabbed and now one can travel in the interior of Sindh freely. To another question the Defence Minister said very soon the ORMARA Naval Port would start functioning as we have done away with the formal procedure and are working on the practical aspects of the project. When he was asked to comment on a news-item VOA had relayed about Pakistan's acquisition of Chinese missiles, Syed Ghaus Ali Shah said he was in no position to challenge the report. but if all it was correct what harm Pakistan could do to anyone because India hd acquired more sophisticated atomic missiles and it was developing atomic missiles for the last few years. Pakistan has full right to defend its borders, he added.

To another question, the Defence Minister said, that the Shah Bandar incident case has been referred to the Court of Law and the government will accept the verdict of the Court.

Bhutto Statements Called 'Naive'

BK0812114592 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 8 Dec 92 p 6

[Editorial: "Benazir's Desperation"]

[Text] The Co-Chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Ms. Benazir Bhutto, has once against proved that she can go to any length in her desperate bid for power. Appearing in a major US television network, NBC, she has given credence to its explosive report that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) discovered Pakistan's 'hidden' nuclear arsonals in the spring of 1990. She has had the cheek to say that when informed of Pakistan's nuclear capability by the CIA and the US Ambassador confronted President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and the Pakistan military leadership which led to her removal from office.

The very fact that the former Prime Minister agreed to appear in a US television programme orchestrated by the anti-Pakistan lobby in Washington is condemnable in itself. The exclusive news report on the NBC was about "Pakistan's Islamic Bomb", in which it was alleged that Pakistan can assemble seven nuclear weapons in a matter of hours and put them on a plane for dropping. The programme was based on interviews with Ms. Benazir Bhutto, US Senators Larry Pressler and John Glen, both of whom endorsed the CIA's findings, and Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan who brushed aside Ms. Benazir Bhutto's charges. He said no one would believe that a Prime Minister is not aware of what is going on in her country in a vital area. However, to catch the eye and enlist the support of the only superpower, she complained in the NBC interview that she was not taken into confidence on such a major issue. She went to the extent of saying that "someone may have turned on the nuclear switch in the spring of 1990" and as a former Prime Minister she cannot totally rule out

the possibility of Pakistan exporting nuclear technology. Such talk is extremely damaging for the country. However this is the stance she has adopted ever since her dismissal from office in August, 1990; what she has now said is consistent with her earlier statements. In a visit to Washington in January, 1991, she had claimed in the address to the Carnegie Endowment for Peace that her dismissal from office was because she had discovered what was going on in the fields of metal shaping and enrichment. It is unfortunate that a former chief executive of the country and the current Leader of the Opposition has come up with such "revelations" when a new administration is shortly to be inducted in the United States. It would only help it further pressurise Pakistan on the nuclear issue. It is also notable that Ms. Benazir Bhutto's interview comes on the eve of the Prime Minister's visit to Japan, a country extremely sensitive on the nuclear issue. It smacks of naive opportunism on her part and the sooner she desists from it the better.

Control of Nuclear Program Viewed

BK0612103592 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 6 Dec 92 p 10

[Editorial: "Ms Bhutto's nuclear fallout"]

[Text] Predictably, Ms Bhutto is getting flak for saying what she did to NBC about Pakistan's nuclear programme. She had said she didn't know that Pakistan had 'crossed' the threshold earlier 'agreed' by the 'troika' [the government establishment, the military, and the president] in Islamabad with Washington. Quondam [former] COAS [Chief of Army Staff] General Mirza Aslam Beg presumably gave the go-ahead to Kahuta in 1989 for crossing the threshold without taking the elected leadership into confidence. This has been said earlier, too, and has not been a secret that Ms Bhutto is now guilty of revealing to an American TV network. Presumably, the president was in on it; the PM [Prime Minister] was not considered worthy of being made privy to the secret. If General Beg was the big 'strategist' in the national army, it has not paid off. People don't even remember the 'defiance' meanderings he was given to when he was in charge. He refused to discuss the defence budget with the civilian government and thought Kahuta was his monopoly. Nothing that he did has stood up to the test of circumstance, including his great Saddam blunder. This year Pakistan has 'frozen' its nuclear programme at Kahuta at the 1989 level. This clearly means that whatever the COAS and the president did after 1989 has been 'rolled back'. Who has 'betrayed' Pakistan's honour?

There are really no secrets. It is wrong on the part of politicians to bash each other on an issue that is not within their grasp. Over the years, public opinion has accepted the fact that the elected government should stay out of the process of decision-making related to our nuclear programme. Political leaders have accepted that while they suffer the punishment for what is happening inside Kahuta, they would go on nurturing the misinformed public opinion against their own right to be in control. Throughout the 7th Five-Year Plan (1983-88), no nuclear or hydel [hydroelectric] addition could be made to the national power grid because nuclear power was embargoed and the Kalabagh Dam couldn't be built because of inter-provincial politics. Ten years later, Pakistan is 2000 MW short of electricity and is subject to loadshedding. The thermal power it has acquired over this period is eating up 30 per cent of its oil bill; and if the oil prices go up, its electricity costs will make every export commodity non-competitive. The Karachi nuclear plant is running only 40 per cent of the time it should, produces 80 MW instead of the installed capacity of 137 MW and supplies one-twentieth of the electricity that Karachi needs. Arms embargo is hurting the army equally. One reason the nuclear 'freeze' has been accepted by the troika in Islamabad is this erosion of the conventional defence. The lesson to be learnt from Ms Bhutto's 'betrayal' on NBC is that Mian Nawaz Sharif should be in charge of the nuclear programme as the elected leader of the country, the defence budget should be tabled in the National Assembly, and Pakistan should embark on a new diplomacy to minimise the effect of the punishment it is enduring because of a policy handled outside the civilian government. If things have changed since Ms Bhutto, then one can understand the deal the government has made with France over the Chashma nuclear plant and the 'freeze' it has agreed with Washington. Meanwhile, politicians can bash each other freely over something that people don't know much about.

U.S. Pressure on India Urged

BK0412074992 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 4 Dec 92 p 10

[Editorial: "Senator Pressler's Seven Bombs"]

[Text] In a TV network programme in Washington, Senator Pressler, under whose name a US Congress amendment disallows aid to Pakistan, has alleged that Pakistan has seven nuclear bombs. Senator Glenn, who thinks that Pakistan doesn't have to test its nuclear device because of its Chinese connection, also took part in the discussion. Ms Bhutto, when interviewed couldn't agree with Senator Pressler on the plea of lack of knowledge. Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Mr Shahryar Khan denied Mr Pressler's allegation and said that Pakistan did not possess the bomb because it had yet to take the political decision to make one. His view was that the Pressler Amendment was felt to be a bad law in some circles even in the US because of its "tilt" against Pakistan and because of its non-application in South Asia as a whole, even after the US supported Pakistan's proposal for the denuclearisation of the region.

Senators Pressler and Glenn are known to be anti-Pakistan politicians whose policies were thwarted by the Afghan war and by a Republican president in office. The CBS interview has anticipated the Democratic push to the anti-proliferation campaign in South Asia. If this push is based on the bias of the two senators, it will

ignore the anti-proliferation diplomacy employed by the US in South Asia. The multilateral conference endorsed by Washington to compel India and Pakistan to talk about their bombs with the nuclear powers within the NPT [nuclear non-proliferation treaty] is expected to materialise some time next year. India has bombs because it exploded a device in 1974 and has fissile material from its 10 nuclear reactors, 8 out of which are unsafeguarded. Pakistan has one nuclear reactor under safeguards producing at 50 per cent of its capacity and supplying electricity to one-twentieth part of Karachi. Pakistan has one unsafeguarded reprocessing facility at Kahuta where it says it is enriching for the Karachi plant. No government in Pakistan can survive if it accepts a unilateral "striptease" under American pressure; India has to be persuaded to join in the new regime if it has to come. Both India and Pakistan would be better advised to foreswear the bomb and start looking after their economies breaking under the punitive measures imposed by the West on them. The bomb-haters in Pakistan are reasonable people and will grow in strength only if India is targeted by the US politicians in equal measure. Pakistan Government's stance is flexible and non-proliferationist. The US should recognise that and take to some navel-gazing on the question of guarantees in case it would like Pakistan to sign the NPT unilaterally. It should realise that it offers absolutely no consolation to governments who are willing to toe the line at the risk of falling from power. Under the circumstances, Pakistan's position is correct.

India Urged To Stop Opposing Nuclear-Free Zone

BK1412130992 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 14 Dec 92 p 7

[Editorial: "Delhi's Nuclear Folly"]

[Text] One of the many distinguishing features of the post-cold war world is its emphasis on nuclear non-proliferation and regional disarmament. Even though both these concerns were significant themes in the era before what has been depicted as the end of history, the manner in which these dominate international attention in today's world is unprecedented. Crucially, unlike the past, many Third World countries now share the concerns of ridding humanity of the curse of doomsday weapons and working towards a nuclear-free world.

Pakistan has consistently supported nuclear non-proliferation both at the regional and global level. In this regard Islamabad has made more than a dozen proposals over the year. Of these Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's suggestion for a five nation conference to create a nuclear free zone in South Asia is particularly significant. This has been backed by almost all the major states of the world, including the United States, China, France and Russia.

On umpteen occasions, similar proposals on non-proliferation have been endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly. The latest endorsement came on Wednesday when the 179-member Assembly approved Pakistan's proposal which underlined the complementary nature of both the regional and global approaches to solve the nuclear problem. India abstained from voting on a suggestion which was unanimously adopted. Pakistan also presented two other proposals: one called for a nuclear-free South Asia and the other for strengthening security guarantees to the non-nuclear states. These too were endorsed. India again abstained.

The rapidity with which efforts against nuclear proliferation are gaining pace and momentum, is reflective of a growing international consensus on the issue. The fear of a nuclear holocaust and its frightening fallouts, are no longer seen to be bogies, as they once were, created by the West to hold on to its monopoly over nuclear weapons. These have now come to be recognised by a majority of states as concrete issues, which require urgent attention and effective long-term solutions.

Unfortunately, countries like India, in their unbridled pursuit of misguided ambitions for power and hegemony, are still resisting this welcome change of attitudes. On one pretext or the other, Delhi has persisted with its nuclear ambitions and has constantly ducked the question of establishing a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. Delhi's longstanding argument that the nuclear issue has to be solved at the global level has been rendered pointless after both China and France acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) this year. Even South Africa has more [or] less agreed to abide by the treaty.

Ideally, China's entry into the NPT club should have assuaged India's (baseless) fears that Beijing's nuclear muscle was a direct threat to its security. Ideally also, Delhi should have appreciated the relevance of accepting Pakistan's efforts to make the South Asian region a nuclear-free zone. This has not happened, and Delhi continues to persist on a disastrous nuclear path. It is time for India's policymakers to realise the folly of its intransigence on an issue on which hinge the prospects of lasting peace in the region. The sooner this happens the better.

Closing of Consulate General in Bombay Denied

BK1612121492 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman has termed as baseless and speculative some press reports regarding the closure of Pakistan Consulate General in Bombay and recall of diplomatic personnel from the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi. He, however, said that in view of the tense communal situation in Bombay, the families of the staff members of the Pakistan Consulate General were evacuated on the 10th of this month.

Meanwhile, an official of the Pakistan High Commission in India, Mr. Mohammad Ashfaq, who was brutally tortured by the Indian intelligence personnel on the fifth of this month, is reaching Lahore tomorrow. The

spokesman said initially the Indian government had asked Mr. Ashfaq to leave the country within seven days but in view of his poor health condition caused by excessive torture, Pakistan had asked India to permit a special Pakistani aircraft to evacuate him. The Indian Government did not accede to this request but agreed to extend the time limit for his withdrawal by another week. The spokesman said the extension in his stay by India indicated their (?gradual) acceptance that Mr. Ashfaq was not in a fit physical condition to travel earlier.

Security Chief Denies Attack on Pakistani Boat

BK1512123592 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 15 Dec 92 p 1

[Text] Karachi, Dec 14—The Maritime Security Agency [MSA] late Sunday night denied attack by an Indian helicopter gunship on a Pakistani fishing boat in Pakistani territorial waters which resulted in the killing of one fisherman and injuring the other.

Commodore Mohammad Yunus, director-general [DG] of the Maritime Security Agency, talking to APP said: "We have no knowledge of any such incident occurring in Pakistan territorial waters. [no end quote mark as published] He said the Pakistani ships have been asked to ascertain the facts.

However, the MSA, DG maintained that so far the local reports could not be confirmod.

Commodore Yunus said if any such incident had taken place in the Pakistani waters the maritime agencies would have been the first to know about it.

However, he said there may be possibility of Pakistani fishing trawler intruding into the Indian waters and such an incident might have taken place.

We are trying to gather the correct information but reiterated that at the moment there is no such information.

Chinese Military Delegation Arrives for Visit

BK0612162892 Hong Kong AFP in English 1606 GMT 6 Dec 92

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 6 (AFP)—A five-member Chinese military delegation headed by Major General Yang Guo Ping arrived here Sunday, officials said.

During its 10-day stay in Pakistan the delegation will visit training institution at Rawalpindi, Abbottabad, Peshawar and Lahore and discuss matters of mutual interest with senior Pakistan Army officers, they said.

The official Associated Press of Pakistan news agency said the visit would provide an "opportunity to further consolidate existing friendly relations between armies of two countries."

The visit follows a controversy surrounding the reported sale of M-11 Chinese missile to Pakistan allegedly capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

Akram Zaki Meets PRC Group; Discusses Kashmir

BK0512160492 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 5 Dec 92

[Text] Secretary General for Foreign Affairs Mr. Akram Zaki said Pakistan and the PRC can work together to meet the new challenges in maintaining peace and stability in the region and the world. Speaking to a four-member delegation from the Chinese Foreign Ministry's People's Institute in Islamabad today, he said the Pakistan-PRC friendship is of paramount importance to the stability of South Asia. He said that now we can also cooperate for peace and prosperity in Central Asia, as we have had close ties with them for generations.

Describing Pakistan-PRC ties as extremely cordial and close, the Chinese delegation leader Hu Zhen said that despite changes in the global scenario our everlasting relations will be further strengthened. He said both countries oppose global and regional hegemony.

Apprising the Chinese delegation of the situtions in occupied Kashmir, the secretary general for foreign affairs said peace and stability is seriously jeopardized by the negation of the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir.

Most of Defense Budget Frozen for 3 Years

BK1512131392 Islamabad THE NATION in English 15 Dec 92 p 1

[Text] Islamabad—The government has decided to freeze the defence budget at its current level of Rs.82 billion for the next three financial years. The armed forces will receive a further Rs 15 billion for procurement purposes in this period.

This decision was conveyed to Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Gen Shamim Alam Khan and the three service chiefs at the November 22 Defence Committee of the Cabinet. The Armed Forces were instructed to decide their priorities for the financial period 1993-96. The first meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee in this regard was held at GHQ [General Headquarters] on November 24.

It is pertinent to note that the Rs 82.153 billion defence budget for the current fiscal represented a rise of 15 percent over 1991-92 budget estimate for defence. However, revised estimates revealed defence expenditure to be Rs. 75.769 billion for that year. Therefore, the 1992-93 defence budget was actually only nine percent higher than the figure for the previous year. As the official inflation rate for fiscal 1991-92 stood at 9.97 percent, this year's defence budget already represented a fall in real terms.

In reaching this decision, the government has bowed to pressure from the international donor agencies, primarily the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, on its increasing budgetary deficit. The government admitted to a figure of Rs 72 billion for 1991-92. In his budget speech Finance Minister Sartaj Aziz set a target of Rs 65 billion for the current financial year.

However, he recently admitted that the September superfloods would cost the government an extra Rs. (?21) billion in terms of deficit financing. But this figure is revealed by the confidential reports of his own ministry, which speak in terms of a budgetary deficit of Rs.150 billion for 1992-93. The deficit would thus constitute 12.5 percent of the Gross Domestic Product. The immediate consequence would be inflation of 25 percent.

In terms of a frozen defence budget, the most important result would be the gradual devaluation of the rupee, which would lead to more expensive imports. The armed forces are undergoing a fundamental change with all three services planning major overseas purchases. The Army plans to buy 300 T-72 tanks from Eastern Europe, the Air Force is looking at the possibility of buying 40 Russian Su-27 jet fighters, and the Navy is on the verge of finalising a deal for the purchase of three French submarines. The army also desperately needs pontoon bridges, while the Navy has to renew the lease on borrowed American frigates.

The special grant of Rs. 15 billion amounts to approximately $600 million at present rates. With inflation headed for a rise of 15 percent the next year, the real value of the amount will drastically decrease. The armed forces have been told that if they want to go through with any major defence purchases which exceed their budget, they will have to make up the difference from their recurring defence budget.

However, the freeze on the regular defence budget will cause major headaches for the armed forces in its own right. Salaries and pensions alone make up 40 per cent of the budget of the armed forces. The burden is so great that the Army has already delayed the retirement of its forces on one occasion. The armed forces have little choice but to bring into effect streamlining plans which would reduce fresh (?inflation) and abolish pensions in favour of lump sum redundancy payments.

9-Point Plan To Improve Investment Noted

BK1012122792 Karachi DAWN in English 9 Dec 92 p 20

[By Shaheen Sehbai]

[Text] Tokyo, Dec 8—Japan is understood to have laid down in nine point plan of action for Islamabad to improve its overall investment environment, particularly if it wants to attract Japanese investment.

The proposals have been formulated by economic missions that have recently been visiting Pakistan and cover almost all the controversial and sensitive areas that every investor in Pakistan should be worried about.

Coming on the eve of the visit by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to this Far Eastern country, the action plan appears to be an uphill task for the Nawaz Sharif government, embroiled in intense politicking on the domestic front to sustain itself in power.

The five major points of the plan include:

—Consistency and full transparency of policies [as published] (legislation and codification) to ensure conformity with international commercial practices.

—Maintenance of law and order and political stability.

—Improvement of the living environment (simplification and rationalisation of immigration procedures for foreigners, relaxation of import regulations on Japanese food and alcohol, etc.).

—Tariff reductions of exemptions in respect of import of capital goods.

—Enhancement of education level, including the literacy rate.

Besides these, prompt resolution of the Riba issue is part of the plan with the Japanese stressing that Pakistan should adopt "realistic measures in conformity with international practices. [no end quotation mark as published]

Other proposals include conducting "effective public relations activities by Pakistan to attract investment" through sending promotion missions not only to major cities and large enterprises but also to local cities and medium-sized enterprises in Japan.

One proposal says Pakistan should assign investment experts at the embassies overseas and contribute toward establishing a "South Asia Centre" and an "Investment Consultation Centre" in Japan.

Pakistan should also promote exports to Japan and other countries by making use of Japanese trading companies, the action plan says.

Explaining the Japanese reservations about investment in Pakistan, officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and MITI the International Trade and Industry Ministry, say the law and order situation in the country was the main obstacle.

"Whenever we receive information about ethnic disturbances and trouble in Sindh, we are concerned. The Government has to solve these issues to provide security to foreign investment," Mr Katagiri of MITI said.

A high-level Japanese delegation, led by Deputy Minister Saito, discussed these issues with Islamabad officials in

late November this year, in anticipation of the visit by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Officials explain that Pakistan had a lot of positive points, its Government was enthusiastic about foreign investment and deregulation and improvement in policies had taken place, but "the key point is to make Pakistan visible to Japanese investment."

Their concerns about transparency of procedures stem from what they privately say were "undue favours" done to the South Koreans in the one-billion-dollar Punjab Motorway and some of the privatised public sector units.

When I asked Mr Sobashiba of the South Asia Division of the Foreign Ministry, who recently toured Pakistan with the Prince and Princess of Japan, what he thought about the Motorway deal, his answer was more polite and purely diplomatic.

"We feel we have enough strength in our economy and our export sector that we can meet any challenge on merits," he said without going into details.

Yet the stress in the action plan that Pakistan must "conform to international commercial practices" underlines the feeling of hurt pride felt by the Japanese, specially in the case of the Motorway project.

After hearing a number of officials, in specially-arranged briefings, I asked the Director of MITI for South Asian Affairs, Mr Katagiri, in frank and simple words: "All this boils down to the conclusion that for the next two or three years, Japan was not interested in investing anything in Pakistan. Then what are you going to offer our Prime Minister when he makes his first official visit to your country?"

"This is a difficult question," Katagiri said in slow, polite tones through his pretty Japanese interpreter, although he could understand English very well. "We are arranging a yen loan package the details of which I cannot give."

Does it include the one-hundred-million-dollars flood relief assistance that I presume Japan has decided to provide? I asked him. "Probably yes," he said nodding.

"But for our investment you have to make the environment favourable for the Japanese," he added.

MQM Chief Altaf Hussain Retires From Politics

BK1512155192 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 Dec 92

[Text] According to ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN, Muhajir Qaumi Movement leader Altaf Hussain has announced about his retirement from active politics. In a statement from London, which was released to the media in Karachi through a fax message, he said he is abandoning politics on health grounds.

Minister To Be Arrested for PDA Activist's Murder

BK1312112992 Islamabad THE NATION in English 13 Dec 92 p 1

[Text] Peshawar—The local civil authorities contacted the Federal Government as well as Speaker of the National Assembly for the arrest of the Federal Railway Minister, Ghulam Ahmad Bilour, who is charged in the murder case of a PDA [People's Democratic Alliance] worker Habibul Hassan.

Reliable sources informed that local city Magistrate has issued letter to the Federal Government and National Assembly Speaker in this regard. On receiving response, the authorities will make arrangement for the arrest of Jahi Ghulam Ahmed Bilour.

It may be mentioned here that on previous Monday PDA activist Habibul Hassan lost his life when someone opened fire on a procession arranged against the desecration of Babri Masjid.